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# NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,

OF THE

STATE OF NEW YORK.

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TRANSMITTED TO THE LEGISLATURE, FEBRUARY 2, 1863.

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ALBANY:

COMSTOCK & CASSIDY, PRINTERS.

1863.





# State of New York.

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No. 20.

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## IN ASSEMBLY,

February 2, 1863.

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NINTH ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

STATE OF NEW YORK:

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,  
ALBANY, February 2, 1863. }

*To the Hon. Speaker of the Assembly :*

SIR—I herewith transmit to the Legislature, the Ninth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the abstracts and documents accompanying the same.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

V. M. RICE,

*Superintendent of Public Instruction.*



# REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

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STATE OF NEW YORK:  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, }  
ALBANY, January 1, 1863.

*To the Legislature of the State of New York:*

The Superintendent of Public Instruction, in compliance with the provisions of law, respectfully submits the following

## REPORT.

The accompanying tables and documents exhibit, in a condensed form, what the State is doing in the department of education, and contain information on the following subjects:

1st. Valuation of property in each county, and amount of school tax in 1858; together with the present equalized valuation by the State Assessors, and the tax for 1862.

2d. The amount of the general school tax paid and received by each county; the amount apportioned from the Common School Fund to each county, with the aggregate amount apportioned to it.

3d. Apportionment of school moneys for 1863: showing the population of each county, by cities and rural districts; the number of school districts; the amount apportioned for teachers' wages by "district quotas," and according to population; and the amount apportioned for libraries.

4th. Abstract from the statistical reports of the School Commissioners, showing:

1. The number of school districts in each county.
2. Teachers employed at the same time for six months.
3. Number of children between the ages of 4 and 21, residing in the district.



4. Number of free schools.
5. Number of private schools.
6. Number of pupils attending private schools.
7. Time district school was in session.
8. Teachers: by whom licensed, and number of each sex.
9. Number of children taught, classified as to time of attendance.
10. Number of inspections by commissioners.
11. Volumes in district libraries.
12. School-houses, classified as to structure.
- 5th. Abstract from the financial reports of the School Commissioners, showing, under the head of

#### RECEIPTS:

1. The amount of money on hand at the commencement of the fiscal year closing with September 30, 1862.
2. Amount apportioned by State Superintendent
3. Proceeds of the gospel and school lands.
4. Amount raised by tax.
5. Amount raised by rate bills.
6. Received from all other sources.
7. Total of receipts.

#### PAYMENTS:

8. For teachers' wages.
9. For libraries.
10. For school apparatus.
11. For colored schools.
12. For school-houses, sites, fences, out-houses, repairs, etc.
13. For all other incidental expenses.
14. Amount remaining on hand October 1, 1862.
15. Total of payments.
- 6th. Statement showing the increase and diminution of the Common School Fund, for the year.
- 7th. Showing the investment of the capital of the Common School Fund, at the close of each fiscal year since its establishment.

[A.] List of academies in which teachers' classes are to be organized in 1862-3.

[B.] List of School Commissioners.

[C.] Report of the Trustees of the Thomas Orphan asylum, for orphan and destitute Indian children.

[D.] Report of the Superintendent of the Indian schools on the Cattaraugus and Allegany reservations.

[E.] Statistics of Indian schools.

[F.] Statistics of Teachers' Institutes.

The number of school districts in the State, reported in 1862, was 11,763; in 1861, the number was 11,683.

The number of school-houses, and their designation according to the material of which they are constructed, is as follows:

	Log.	Frame.	Brick.	Stone.	Total.
In 1862.....	228	10,004	964	554	11,750
In 1861.....	246	9,918	971	562	11,697

While this shows a decrease of eighteen in the number of log houses during the past year, a decrease of seven brick and of eight stone houses, an increase of eighty-six in the number of framed houses, and a total increase of fifty-three in the State, it does not show the number of new houses erected to replace others of the same material. The actual improvement in this direction may be better understood from an exhibit of the amount of money expended for sites, and for building, purchasing, hiring, repairing and insuring school-houses, and for fences, out-houses, etc., which was,

	Cities.	Rural Districts.
In 1862.....	\$339,316 56	\$210,852 44
In 1861.....	427,786 17	228,390 85

More than a moiety of this large expenditure is for the erection of better school buildings, furnished with more appropriate accommodations for the comfort, convenience and instruction of pupils.

The number of volumes in the district libraries is reported as follows:

	Cities.	Rural Districts.	Total.
In 1862.....	101,104	1,225,578	1,326,682
In 1861.....	99,302	1,206,075	1,305,377

There was expended for libraries:

	Cities.	Rural Districts.	Total.
In 1862.....	\$6,353 82	\$26,559 10	\$32,912 92
In 1861.....	7,411 74	26,733 63	34,145 37

There was expended for school apparatus :

	Cities.	Rural Districts.	Total.
In 1862.....	\$85,968 78	\$8,487 40	\$94,456 18
In 1861.....	81,100 59	7,533 02	88,633 61

The amount expended for libraries and apparatus during the past year was \$127,369.10. (Of this sum, \$55,000 was apportioned to the cities and rural districts from the income of the U. S. Deposit Fund. The balance, \$72,369.10, was, therefore, raised by voluntary taxation in the cities and districts.)

It will hardly fail to be observed that the amount applied to the purchase of libraries is diminishing, while that expended for apparatus is rapidly increasing, and that there is a higher appreciation of the value of apparatus in the cities than in the rural districts.

The \$55,000 appropriated for libraries was divided as follows :

Cities.	Rural Districts.	Total.
\$20,142 14	\$34,857 86	\$55,000 00

The number of persons between the ages of four and twenty-one years, as reported, is :

	Cities.	Rural Districts.	Total.
In 1862.....	443,826	878,997	1,322,823
In 1861.....	423,079	915,088	1,338,167

This shows an increase, during the year, in the number reported in the cities, and a decrease in the rural districts. To reconcile this apparent discrepancy between the cities and the country—a discrepancy appearing in the report of no former year—it is necessary only to direct attention to the manner in which, in the two cases, these numbers are obtained. An actual enumeration of the children of school age, in some of the cities, not having been made, the number of such children, as reported to this Department, is only an approximate estimate based on the relations of age and the increase of population; and no allowance has probably been made for the demands of the war for volunteers. It is otherwise in the country. Two-thirds of the public money is apportioned to the various counties according to population: this is reapportioned by the Commissioners to



each school district, in proportion to the number of persons between the ages of four and twenty-one years residing therein. Hence, in the rural districts, the law requires an actual enumeration of persons of the prescribed age; and those who departed for the war, have, manifestly, not been enumerated.

Of the number thus reported, 892,550 are returned as having attended school for a longer or shorter period during the year. For no previous year has the attendance been so large.

The number of private schools reported is 1537, with an aggregate attendance of 47,374.

The number of pupils connected with the academies and colleges in the State, during the year, is about 40,000.

If we assume 60,000 as the attendance upon private schools, and that these, together with those attending the academies, are all within the schoolage, we have, between the ages of four and twenty-one, not connected with the schools, 333,273.

It must be borne in mind, however, that as fixed by statute, the school age includes all children between the ages of four and twenty-one years; whilst experience has abundantly shown that a large proportion of children between the ages of four and six, and between seventeen and twenty-one, do not attend school. Out of seventeen school years, then, there are six which are really not school-going years; so that about two-sevenths of the general enumeration, amounting to 377,948 in the year, consist of children whom we could not reasonably expect to find in attendance at school at all. Some of those of the younger class mentioned, it is true, do attend in the cities, and in the country during the summer term, and some of the older class during the winter; but these do not make the larger proportion between those ages. And when we take into consideration the many causes which go to make up the large non-attendance of children of the proper school age, such as the poverty of parents who require the

wages of their children during a part of the year ; the dread, in the rural districts, of the rate-bill ; the distance from school-houses which cannot be walked by the younger children in stormy weather, and the interruptions occasioned by the diseases incident to childhood and youth, we may cease to wonder at the magnitude of the delinquencies. After making all possible allowances, however, the evil is still great ; and any remedy which will remove it, even partially, is worthy of attentive consideration. The undersigned stated, in a report transmitted to the Legislature, January 31, 1857, that “in the rural districts, greater regularity of attendance might be secured by distributing a part of the public money upon the basis of attendance ; that a distribution on such a basis would make it the pecuniary interest of every tax-payer in the district to encourage a regular and general attendance, and that parents would be less willing to permit their children to absent themselves from school for trifling causes.” The subsequent reports from this Department have substantially repeated the same suggestion. But there has been a practical difficulty in obtaining a correct record of attendance ; and it would not do to make an apportionment upon a registry kept on loose sheets of paper, and made up without sufficient care. The temptation to exaggerate the number of children and the regularity of their attendance, for the purpose of increasing the apportionment, must be removed before money can be safely distributed on such a basis. The only practical way of doing this, will be to require each district to provide a school register, and the teacher to note down daily the attendance or absence of each pupil, and make oath to its correctness before he shall obtain his wages. Though the law does now require trustees to furnish registers for their respective districts, many of them neglect to do so. The expense of providing such registers would be much reduced if the State were to prepare them in quantities, by applying a portion of the library money for that purpose. The importance of such

a register was well stated by my predecessor in his report for 1859, was reiterated in that for 1860, and approved in the report from this Department for 1861. Mr. VAN DYCK remarks: "Could each district be furnished with a 'School Register,' substantially bound, properly ruled, and so divided as to show the name and age of each pupil, the time of his entrance into school, and each day of his attendance throughout the week, month and term; imposing little labor on the teacher, and removing all excuse for inaccuracy, while it would form a continuous record of the school for successive years, it would constitute the greatest boon which could at this time be conferred on our common schools. In no way could the duties of trustees be so eminently lightened; in no way could a fruitful source of dissension and litigation in the districts be so readily removed, as by the adoption of the measure proposed. With a permanent record before them, trustees would find no difficulty in properly apportioning the rate bills; and at the close of the year a transcript of attendance could be made that would be in all respects reliable, both as a matter of general information and an indication of the extent to which our citizens avail themselves of the educational privileges provided by the State."

The attendance upon the public schools, for a series of years, is reported as follows:

	1857.	1859.	1860	1861.	1862.
10 months and over.....	54,434	52,995	64,302	63,810	72,000
8 do and less than 10...	53,716	58,539	60,202	60,351	61,791
6 do do 8...	117,507	115,832	117,022	117,145	118,937
4 do do 6...	179,611	178,069	181,077	176,136	180,030
2 do do 4...	221,656	239,708	237,175	239,814	241,851
Less than 2 months.....	191,175	215,213	207,610	215,598	217,941
Totals.....	<u>842,137</u>	<u>851,533</u>	<u>867,388</u>	<u>872,854</u>	<u>892,550</u>

The number attending the same schools in 1862 is thus divided between the cities and the rural districts:

In the cities.....	291,679
In the rural districts.....	600,871
Total.....	<u>892,550</u>

The average time school was taught during the year, not including the cities, was seven months and fifteen days; in 1861 the average time was seven months and thirteen days. In the cities, the average time is a little over ten months, and, from year to year, is quite uniform.

The teachers employed during the last two years were:

	1861.	1862. §
Males.....	8,094	7,585
Females.....	18,378	18,915
Totals.....	<u>26,472</u>	<u>26,500</u>

This statement includes all teachers who have been employed for any time, however short; and many, doubtless, are reported twice, having taught school in different districts.

The "number of teachers employed at the same time for six months or more," will give more nearly the number required to supply the schools. That number was:

	1861.	1862.
In the cities.....	2,932	3,232
In the rural districts.....	12,379	12,453
Totals.....	<u>15,311</u>	<u>15,685</u>

For the payment of teachers' wages have been expended:

	1861.	1862.
In the cities.....	\$1,185,466 05	\$1,220,497 26
In the rural districts.....	1,469,985 65	1,559,873 79
Totals.....	<u>\$2,655,451 70</u>	<u>\$2,780,371 05</u>

There was raised by taxes, in the rural districts and cities, for school purposes:

	Cities.	Rural districts.	Total.
In 1862.....	\$1,560,456 40	\$507,601 35	\$2,068,057 74
In 1861.....	1,509,615 07	521,195 71	2,030,810 78

There was raised by rate bill, in the rural districts, the sum of \$407,009.57, which must be added to the amount



raised by tax, when comparing the amount raised by the rural districts with the amount raised by cities. This will make the sum raised by the rural districts, the past year, \$914,610.92.

The revenue from the Common School Fund, during the year, was:

From the Fund proper.....	\$138,451 74
From U. S. Deposit Fund.....	165,000 00
Transfer from General Fund for interest on money in the treasury.....	20,204 44
	<hr/>
	\$323,656 18
Balance in treasury last year.....	97,987 32
	<hr/>
	\$421,643 50
Paid during the year.....	348,977 54
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Balance in treasury, September 30, 1862.....	\$72,665 96
	<hr/> <hr/>

The following statement shows the amount of school money, and its apportionment for the year 1862-3:

*Moneys apportioned.*

From the Common School Fund.....	\$155,000 00
U. S. Deposit Fund.....	165,000 00
State school tax.....	1,086,977 96
Balance in treasury.....	1,554 49
	<hr/>
Total.....	\$1,408,532 45
	<hr/> <hr/>

The above amount is apportioned as follows:

For payment of salaries of School Commissioners.....	\$56,000 00
For "district quotas".....	427,102 55
For "pupil quotas".....	869,354 91
For libraries.....	55,000 00
Balance for contingent appropriations.....	1,074 99
	<hr/>
Total.....	\$1,408,532 45
	<hr/> <hr/>

The following is a summary of the statistical and financial reports of the public schools of the State, for the year ending with September 30, 1862:

*Statistical.*

	Cities.	Rural Districts.	Totals.
No. of districts.....	366	11,397	11,763
No. of teachers employed at the same time for six months or more.....	3,232	12,453	15,685
No. of children between 4 and 21 years of age...	443,826	878,997	1,322,823
Aggregate No. of months' school.....	3,986	86,302	90,288
No. of male teachers employed.....	334	7,251	7,585
No. of female do do.....	2,867	16,048	18,915
No. of children attending school.....	291,679	600,871	892,550
No. of times schools have been visited by Commissioners.....	.....	18,883	18,883
No. of volumes in district libraries.....	101,104	1,225,578	1,326,682
No. of school-houses.....	280	11,470	11,750
log houses.....	.....	223	223
framed houses.....	43	9,961	10,004
brick houses.....	234	730	964
stone houses.....	3	551	554

*Financial.*

	Cities.	Rural Districts.	Totals.
<b>Receipts:</b>			
Amount on hand October 1, 1861.....	\$419,833 25	\$81,826 78	\$501,660 03
Apportionment of public moneys.....	394,931 81	999,486 09	1,394,417 90
Proceeds of gospel and school lands..	70 73	19,927 32	19,998 05
Raised by tax.....	1,560,456 40	507,601 35	2,068,057 75
Raised by rate bills.....	.....	407,009 57	407,009 57
From all other sources.....	18,319 72	59,278 40	77,598 12
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$2,393,611 91</b>	<b>\$2,075,129 51</b>	<b>\$4,468,741 42</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
For teachers' wages.....	\$1,220,497 26	\$1,559,873 79	\$3,780,371 05
For libraries.....	6,353 82	26,559 10	32,912 92
For school apparatus.....	85,968 78	8,487 40	94,456 18
For colored schools.....	23,658 04	5,355 08	29,013 12
For school-houses, sites, fences, &c....	389,316 56	210,852 44	600,169 00
For all other incidental expenses.....	244,011 89	174,730 17	418,742 06
Amount on hand October 1, 1862.....	423,805 56	89,271 53	513,077 09
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$2,393,611 91</b>	<b>\$2,075,129 51</b>	<b>\$4,468,741 42</b>

The actual expenditure for maintaining the schools during the year, as seen from the above table ("Total expenditures," less amount on hand October 1, 1862), is: in cities, \$1,969,806.35; rural districts, \$1,985,857.98; total, \$3,955,664.33.

The progress of the schools during the last five years is exhibited in a table of comparative statistics, for the year 1857, and the fiscal year 1861-2. (Appendix, Table 8.)

## LIBRARIES.

There was apportioned for libraries to the cities, for the school year ending with the 30th of September, 1862, the sum of \$20,142.14; of which, only \$6,353.82 was expended for that purpose. The cities generally are authorized to pay their library money for teachers' wages, or school

apparatus, if they prefer to do so; and it is presumed that the sum of \$13,788.32 was thus applied.

For the same time, there was apportioned for libraries to the rural districts, the sum of \$34,887.86; of which, \$26,559.10 was expended for that purpose; showing either that the sum of \$8,328.76 remained in the hands of the trustees on the first day of October, 1862, or had been expended by them for teachers' wages and school apparatus.

In the whole State, the number of volumes in the school district libraries, as reported for several years, is as follows:

In 1856.....	1,418,100
1857, Jan. 1.....	1,377,933
1858, Oct. 1.....	1,402,253
1859.....	1,360,507
1860.....	1,286,536
1861.....	1,305,377
1862.....	1,326,682

This statement shows, very plainly, that the reports of the trustees are not accurate: in fact it is well understood that they seldom take pains to make them so, by counting the books belonging to their respective districts.

It should be borne in mind by those who might anticipate a large increase in the number of books, that the people of the districts to which a less sum than three dollars is apportioned are authorized to expend it for teachers' wages, and that very many of them do so; that the average amount apportioned to the rural districts was only \$3.06; that if we take from the whole amount the large sums which are apportioned to the villages and other thickly populated districts, and divide the residue among the remaining districts, the library money received by each will be even less than \$3.06. The average amount actually expended in the rural districts during the last school year, was only \$2.33. It ought not to be expected that one or two dollars a year will supply a district circulating library with new books as fast as the old ones are lost or worn out, even if the money were all applied to the purchase of new



books at the most reasonable prices. Much less will this be expected by those who know that the trustees generally buy at the highest retail price, and that a large portion of the money is applied to the payment of teachers' wages and the purchase of school apparatus.

In order to form some definite opinion upon this subject, the undersigned called upon the School Commissioners to report to him the condition of the libraries and the extent to which they are used. The nearly uniform reply was, that they are little used, and in many districts the books are so worn that the library money annually received is not sufficient to replace them by others.

In many of the villages and other thickly populated districts to which a much larger sum is apportioned than that to districts generally, the libraries are large, well selected, carefully preserved and highly prized. That one, two, or three districts in a town do entertain a proper appreciation of the value of their libraries, and, by means of the money received from the State, together with that raised by voluntary taxation, manage to keep them in repair, does not change the fact, that a majority of the districts do not receive a sufficient sum to warrant the trustees in giving much time and attention to the selection of books, or to the price they pay for them; and that for some cause, not so much interest is manifested in the libraries as formerly.

Various suggestions and plans in regard to this library money have been made :

1st. That the district libraries should be consolidated into town libraries. The objections made to this are : that the inhabitants of some districts in nearly every town prize their libraries highly, have taken proper care of them, have taxed themselves liberally for their repair and enlargement, and would be unwilling to surrender the use of them to the town ; that, if this objection were removed, another equally forcible would appear, namely, that the town libraries would be inconveniently distant from the

inhabitants of many of the districts, and therefore they would seldom resort to them; and that the people of the districts are generally opposed to such consolidation. As evidence of this, it is remarked, that chapter 480 of the Laws of 1847 authorized the districts to consolidate their libraries; and had the plan met with favor, they would have availed themselves of the privilege conferred by the law; but, on the contrary, there is scarcely an instance of the establishment of a "joint library" under its authority.

2d. That the majority of the voters of the district should have the power, at an annual meeting, to direct this money to be applied to teachers' wages. In support of this plan, it is urged that the law does direct the money to be applied to that purpose, whenever the sum received does not exceed three dollars, and that they are equally competent to direct a similar expenditure of five or even ten dollars; that the cities have full authority to apply the large sums of money which they receive to that purpose, and that the rural districts are quite as competent to determine this question as are the cities; that there is no dearth of reading matter in the rural districts; that one of the principal reasons why the district libraries are not so highly regarded as formerly, is the fact that thousands of families now have private libraries, whereas but a very few had the like twenty years ago; and that during the last quarter of a century, newspapers and other periodicals have increased wonderfully in cheapness, ability and circulation, so that they are now found in almost every household, occupying the largest share of the time which the inmates devote to reading; and, finally, that when the inhabitants of a district, thus supplied or not, feel sufficient interest in their library to warrant its preservation and usefulness, they would continue to apply the money to the purchase of books, notwithstanding the law might authorize them to do otherwise.

3d. That the money should be allowed to accumulate in the treasury, till it shall reach a sum sufficient to buy large

editions of valuable books ; and that competent persons should then be appointed to select and purchase such editions, and cause them to be distributed among the districts. It is claimed that, under this plan, none but meritorious books would find their way into the libraries, and that this would be the most economical mode of expending this money for books ; but they could not, like money, be distributed according to the number of children of school age, nor according to population. The only practical mode of distribution would be to treat the districts, large and small, alike, by allowing to each the most important volumes thus purchased.

4th. Still another plan proposes to continue the present mode of apportionment, and to require each district, as a prerequisite to the reception of its portion of the library money, to raise an equal sum by taxation for the same purpose. It is urged that such an annual tax would secure attention to the proper care and preservation of the libraries ; and that the money thus raised by tax, united with that received from the State, would make, annually, an appreciable addition of valuable books. Were this plan adopted, the difficulty of securing the proper selection and purchase of books, at a reasonable price, would still exist.

The undersigned commits this subject to the wisdom of the Legislature, hoping that they will be able to determine what action will be proper in regard to it.

#### COMMON SCHOOL FUND.

A brief history of this Fund, up to the close of the fiscal year ending with September 30, 1856, may be found in the report from this Department, made January 15, 1857.

Table F, annexed to this report, will show how the capital of this fund has been invested, and its increase from its beginning to the close of the last fiscal year. It is now composed of bonds for land sold, loans upon bond and mortgage, loan under authority of the law of 1840, Manhattan

Bank stock, State stock, Comptroller's bonds, and money in the treasury.

The bonds for loans have been annually diminishing since 1836; from which it may be inferred that the *valuable* lands set apart for this fund by the Constitution of 1822 have been nearly all sold, and that the annual payments are gradually diminishing this investment. It will be noticed by reference to table 7, annexed to this report, that the annual increase of the capital has for several years been but little more than \$25,000, which the Constitution requires to be added to it each year from the income of the United States Deposit Fund.

The Constitution declares that the capital shall be inviolate, but leaves the investment and care of it to the direction of the Legislature. One million seven hundred and seventy-seven thousand five hundred and thirty dollars and forty-four cents (\$1,777,530.44) of this fund is invested in State stocks, Comptroller's bonds, and money in the treasury; which means that this sum has been loaned to the General Fund.

The propriety is suggested of asking from the Commissioners of the Land Office, to whom the management of the school lands has been committed by law, a statement in detail, showing each and every sale of these school lands, its date, the location and quantity of land included in it, to whom made, the amount of the consideration, the security (if any) for the payment of the purchase money, and the principal and interest (or either) annually received. They might also report, at the same time, the lands remaining unsold, and their location. It would also be pertinent to this subject to inquire whether the Commissioners have regarded escheated lands as dedicated by the Constitution to the School Fund, and whether the granting of them by legislative acts or otherwise is not in violation of the Constitution.

The annual statement of the Comptroller is the chief source from which a knowledge of the School Fund has



ever been obtained, and the undersigned is not aware that the report of that officer has ever exhibited the facts desired.

The sum of \$300,000, received in bonds of the city of New York, for lands, the title to which had been claimed by that city, is now in the treasury, but not placed to the credit of the Common School Fund. These lands were formerly under the water of the Hudson river, and had been filled in and built upon, and, in their improved condition, were of immense value. The undersigned is informed that the Supreme Court, on the trial of the cause brought by the State to recover possession of the same, held that the lands were the property of the State. The case was carried up to the Court of Appeals, but, before argument, was settled, by the Commissioners of the Land Office granting the lands to the city in consideration of the said sum of \$300,000.

The late Comptroller, Mr. DENNISTON, assumed that this money belongs to the General Fund; and the present Comptroller retains it as a part of that fund. It is believed that, under the Constitution, it is a part of the Common School Fund, and ought to be placed to the credit of that fund. The Constitution of this State, adopted in 1822, to take effect January 1, 1823, contains the following provision:

“The proceeds of all lands belonging to this State, except such parts thereof as may be reserved or appropriated to public use, or ceded to the United States, which shall hereafter be sold or disposed of, together with the fund denominated the Common School Fund, shall be and remain a perpetual fund, the interest of which shall be inviolably appropriated and applied to the support of common schools throughout this State.” (Cons. 1822, art. 7, sec. 10.)

The only question to be determined under this provision, is, whether lands under water were included in the terms, “all lands belonging to this State.” Inasmuch as the whole includes all its parts, these lands were pledged to the School

Fund, unless they were excepted expressly or by implication. The Constitution makes two exceptions: of "such parts thereof as may be reserved or appropriated to public use, or ceded to the United States." Surely it will not be claimed that lands sold are reserved or appropriated to public use; and, moreover, lands are ceded to the United States without consideration. The language of the Constitution is too broad, and cannot admit of an exception by implication, unless it be on the pretence that the framers of it did not know that the State owned lands under water. We can judge of their intent only by the language used, and this is neither doubtful, ambiguous nor imperfect. There is nothing in it to clear up, reconcile, or explain.

It is the province of the Commissioners of the Land Office, when sales of land are made and the proceeds paid into the treasury, to designate the fund to which they belong. If in this case such designation was not made, or if the money was credited to the General Fund, then the Comptroller could not do otherwise than he has done. If, however, an error has been committed, it should be corrected. Money once paid into the treasury cannot be drawn out or transferred, except on the warrant of the Comptroller. That officer may very properly decline to make any transfer of the \$300,000, until directed to do so by law, or by some adjudication authorized by the Legislature. The undersigned is not empowered by any law to institute proceedings against the Comptroller for the trial of this question. He therefore suggests the propriety of some legislative action which shall submit it to the decision of a competent tribunal.

#### STATE TAX.

It is believed to be unnecessary to repeat the arguments which have been so often and so forcibly presented to the public from various sources, to show that it is both the duty and the interest of the State to make ample provision for the education of her children. Nor is it deemed to be neces-

sary to repeat the reasons why this should be done by a tax upon property ; for the people have twice declared at the ballot-box, by overwhelming majorities, that this is the only proper mode ; and through their representatives in the Legislature they have since given effect to that declaration, by enacting laws requiring a State tax to be annually levied and collected, and its proceeds distributed for the support of common schools. For the last eleven years, more than eleven thousand school districts have annually participated in this generous provision ; and its wisdom has been proved by an almost universal acquiescence in it, and by the rapid progress of the schools in efficiency and in popular favor, as shown by a constantly increasing ratio of attendance.

How general is the conviction that the common schools must be supported, even under the most depressing circumstances, is evinced by the liberal support extended to them during the past year, by the people in their school meetings and through their local authorities. During that time, there was raised by local taxation and by rate bill, in the rural districts, \$914,610.92 ; and in the cities, \$1,560,456.40, for their support. In no other way could the will of the people in regard to them have been more forcibly or fully manifested ; and it is believed that the abandonment of a policy in furtherance of their will thus expressed—a policy whose history is so fruitful of good results, and to which they have been so long accustomed—could not meet with their approval, and that it would not only be ruinous to the rural districts, but would lead to the renewal of the controversy which was so happily settled in 1851, and in which all parties to it have since acquiesced.

The conception of the possibility, not probability, of an attempt to reduce the aggregate State tax by discontinuing this portion of it, thus inflicting a lasting and unmerited injury upon the generation under tutelage, will account for my calling your attention to this subject.



## DONATION OF LANDS BY CONGRESS.

On the 2d day of July, 1862, Congress passed an act, entitled "An act donating public lands to the several States and Territories which may provide colleges for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts."

This act apportions to each loyal State 30,000 acres of land, or its representative equivalent in scrip, in case there are no public lands within its boundaries, for each Senator and Representative in Congress to which it is entitled by the apportionment of representation under the census of 1860.

It provides that where there are public lands in a State, subject to sale at private entry, at one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, the quantity to which such State may be entitled shall be selected from such lands; but in case the requisite quantity of such lands does not lie within its jurisdiction, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to issue "land scrip to the amount in acres for the deficiency in its distributive share; said scrip to be sold by the State, and the proceeds thereof to be invested in stocks of the United States, or of the States, or some other safe stocks yielding not less than five per centum upon the par value of said stocks; and that the moneys so invested shall constitute a perpetual fund, the capital of which shall remain forever undiminished, and the interest of which shall be inviolably appropriated to the endowment, support and maintenance of at least one college, where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such manner as the Legislature of the State may prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life."

To this State, the Secretary of the Interior will issue land scrip to the amount in acres of its distributive share; which scrip must be sold, and the proceeds thereof invested in "stocks of the United States, or of the States, or



some other safe stocks yielding not less than five per centum upon the par value of said stocks."

"If any portion of the fund so invested, or any portion of the interest thereon, shall, by any action or contingency be diminished or lost, it is required to be replaced by the State, so that the capital of the fund shall remain forever undiminished."

A magnificent contribution has thus been proffered for the benefit of education; and it only remains for the Legislature to express by law its acceptance thereof, and to make provision for the reception and sale of the land scrip to which it shall be entitled, and for the safe investment of the capital which will be thus acquired. The time of acceptance on the part of the State, is limited to two years from the date of the approval of the act by the President; but since any State, accepting the provisions of the act, shall, within five years, provide at least one college in which shall be taught the branches of learning above mentioned, early action is deemed necessary for a certain and proper compliance with this requirement.

The undersigned is persuaded that true economy and practical wisdom require that this fund shall go to the endowment and support of ONE INSTITUTION. If an attempt shall be made to endow two or more colleges, the whole income may be comparatively useless. The division of it into two parts will be made the entering wedge for applications for another and another division, until the whole will be so divided among many, that not any one will be complete in its facilities for instruction. The State has at various times made grants of land and money to colleges and academies, till the aggregate sum amounts to millions. It has from time to time given a pittance here and a pittance there; and it is not to be denied that, in numerous instances, the chief result of its bounty has been to enable many of these institutions to prolong a precarious existence, too weak to be of real public utility.

With the growing prosperity and accumulating wealth

of the country, there arises the demand for a more learned class of intellectual leaders, who, furnished with the means and leisure necessary in the prosecution of philosophic investigation, may be induced to pursue science for the sake of science itself, irrespective at first of any immediate practical benefit; and who, finally, having acted as pioneers in the front of discovery, and as gatherers of the results of the labors of the learned of other countries and of other ages, shall in turn bestow upon the great public the conclusions of their wisdom, and thus contribute a most ample equivalent for the privileges assigned them. We need only direct attention to the universities of Europe, to show the advantages of a plan which there furnishes such numerous patterns of ripe scholarship and so many examples of successful research in enlarging the boundaries of knowledge. What we need, most emphatically, therefore, is the establishment of ONE INSTITUTION, adequately endowed, offering ample inducements to learned men to become its inmates, and supplied with every attainable facility for instruction in the higher departments of literary and philosophical learning, as well as in the various branches of knowledge pertaining to the industrial and professional pursuits. Its corps of teachers should be composed of men of vigorous natural endowments and the best culture, and in number sufficient to allow a complete division of labor. When thus appointed, the doors of the institution should be open to all who are prepared to enter: it should be free, so that lads born in poverty and obscurity, who may have shown themselves to be meritorious in the primary schools, shall not be excluded.

Hitherto the State has done little for the promotion of agriculture and the mechanic arts. It has encouraged only in a small way, agricultural societies and mechanical institutes. The chief object of this munificent donation on the part of Congress is to provide liberally for their promotion in future. Let us, then, have an institution with which

shall be connected farms and workshops; let boys be taught, if they so desire, everything that pertains to good husbandry and skillful workmanship; let study and manual labor go hand in hand; and then learning will dignify labor, and labor will utilize learning.

INSTITUTIONS FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF THE DEAF AND DUMB, THE  
BLIND, AND IDIOTS.

The number of pupils in the Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, at the close of the last fiscal year, was 314, of whom 149 males and 111 females were beneficiaries of this State. Of these State pupils, 36 were appointed during the year, and the term of attendance of 43 was extended.

Applicants for admission will, probably, increase during the present year; and the same humane consideration, which provides for those now there, requires provision to be made for at least 15 more State pupils.

As the law now is, a State pupil cannot be admitted till he is 12 years of age. This provision was based on the knowledge that deaf mutes, for the most part, before that age, are not sufficiently mature in mind to complete the prescribed course of study within the time for which they are appointed. There are now in the alms-houses, and in circumstances of destitution, a number of deaf mutes under that age; and no sufficient reason is apparent why the law should not be so changed as to allow the admission of all who are eight or ten years of age. This institution is a well-ordered home, the influence of which would be quite as important to them as the instruction they might receive in the school; and the exclusion of those of tender years from the unconscious culture of a home surrounded with happy associations, is deemed worthy of an attentive reconsideration.

There were in the Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, on the 30th of September last, 138 beneficiaries of the State; of whom 23 were appointed during the year, and the time of attendance of 22 was extended.



The undersigned has visited both of these institutions. The buildings erected for the deaf and dumb are most admirably adapted for the health, comfort, and instruction of the pupils; and to the perfect cleanliness observed in and about the premises, the salubrity of their site, the judicious selection and preparation of food for the inmates; and to the inculcation of regular habits, as to rest, physical exercise and study, may be ascribed the fact, that during the year, there has been very little sickness and no death among the pupils. This is remarkable, when it is considered that many cases of deafness are the result of a scrofulous habit.

The buildings for the blind are not well located or adapted to the wants of such an institution: still their internal condition indicates the maintenance of proper sanitary precautions, and the health and apparent happiness of the pupils give evidence of fidelity on the part of those to whose care and instruction they have been committed.

I desire to bear testimony to the admirable system of instruction pursued in both the institutions mentioned. The Institution for the Blind furnishes its pupils with books imprinted in raised letters, and with globes, maps, and other school apparatus of various and ingenious devices; which, with the aid of enlightened teachers, religiously devoted to their welfare, enable them to become proficient in nearly all the branches of instruction ordinarily taught in our best schools.

The psychological problems that are solved in the instruction of the deaf and dumb, and the improvements in the modes of conducting the processes and details of education which are suggested, are making constant accessions to the cause of human advancement. Indeed, but slight modifications of the system of instruction applied to them, would adapt it to the use of schools generally.

In the Asylum for Idiots, which has been in operation about eleven years, there are 140 pupils, and it is now the largest in this country. It provides for a class of persons still more unfortunate than the deaf and dumb, or the blind. The

mode of education adopted in it differs from that in other schools, more in its application than in principle. It reaches down to the lowest stage of human existence, where the manifestation of mind is simply perceptible, and, by progressive exercises, wisely devised and patiently enforced, lifts it up to the point of clear understanding. It does more: it unchains the captive spirit, by making it first master of the "house it lives in," and then gradually and skillfully enlarging the circle of its inquiries, until by often repeated and finally successful efforts, it becomes a free and independent intelligence, qualified to engage in the duties and partake of the rational enjoyments of life.

The pupils in these institutions, with few exceptions, would, in any case, be dependent upon public charity. Their peculiar misfortunes put them beyond the power of private and separate support and instruction. Fifty years ago, they would have been utterly neglected. Happily for them and for mankind, the world has, since then, grown wiser and better. They are now lifted up from their abasement, out of a hopeless and cheerless isolation; they are brought into association, and under the care of the wise and good. Indeed, these institutions are noble charities, worthy of the fostering care of the State.

For details of expenses, etc., you are referred to the Comptroller's report, and to the reports which will be submitted by the officers of the respective institutions.

#### INDIAN SCHOOLS.

Chapter 71 of the Laws of 1856, enacts "that the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall be charged with providing the means of education for all the Indian children in the State. He shall cause to be ascertained the condition of the various bands in the State, in respect to education; he shall establish schools in such places, and of such character and description as he shall deem necessary; he shall employ superintendents for such schools, and shall, with the concurrence of the Comptroller and Secretary of

State, cause to be erected, where necessary, convenient buildings for their accommodation.”

Until the passage of this act, only feeble and fitful attempts had been made to educate the Indian children and youth in this State. Since then, either new school-houses have been built, or old ones have been repaired, on every one of the reservations; schools have been taught in them by competent teachers; text-books have been furnished, and the attendance and progress of the Indian children have been far better than had been anticipated by those who sought by such means to aid in their civilization.

Of these schools, eight are on the Cattaraugus, five on the Allegany, two on the Tuscarora, two on the Tonawanda, one on the Onondaga, two on the Oneida, and two on the St. Regis reservations, respectively. Another is located near Sag Harbor, for the benefit of the Shinecock Indians. The table, in the appendix, marked E, will show the number of children that have attended each school, and the time it was in session, during the last school year. The payments from the State treasury, during the same time, for the erection and repair of school-houses, wages of teachers, purchase of furniture and books, and for expense of supervision, amount to \$4,142.05. Of this sum, there was paid for and on account of schools, on the

Cattaraugus and Allegany reservations .....	\$2,343	32
Oneida reservation .....	324	53
Onondaga do .....	242	62
Tonawanda do .....	306	71
St. Regis do .....	460	87
Tuscarora do .....	368	00
Shinecock do .....	96	00

The undersigned, having visited several of the reservations and their schools, has pleasure in stating that the Indian people generally have a grateful appreciation of the provision of the State, made from year to year, for the education of their children. This is evinced in their conversations; in addresses made at school celebrations, and



elsewhere, by their chief men; in the waning prejudice of the "pagan party" against all schools; and in their more general and willing co-operation with the "Christian party" in patronizing them; and, also, in the constantly increasing attendance of the children. It is also shown by the action of the "National Council," in appropriating land for sites, and, from their scanty treasury, money to aid in building school-houses; in electing a trustee for each of the districts into which most of the reservations are now plotted, and clothing him with plenary power to protect the school property from injury, and to require the male population of his district to furnish the necessary fuel for the use of the school, and also to share in the labor at times required in repairing the school-house; and, finally, it is evinced in the fact that these school-houses and their furniture bear comparatively few traces of the Yankee knife, plied with destructive hands. It is in evidence that in the practice of malicious mischief, in and about their school-houses, these people are far behind their brethren the pale faces.

The teachers employed are persons of unexceptionable character, and worthy of commendation for the manner in which they are performing their difficult tasks. The larger number are females, some of whom could command greater wages as teachers in schools surrounded with the comforts of refined social life; but they choose rather to teach the children of this poor and humble people, believing that in so doing they obey Him, in whose promises of an everlasting reward they have an abiding trust.

Mr. PETTIT, who lives near the Cattaraugus reservation, and who is, in all respects, a competent witness, writes the Superintendent of Public Instruction: "Since these schools were established, the people live in better houses, have better furniture, more of the comforts of civilized life, better cultivated farms and gardens; in their costumes, their food, their manners, and all that appertains to social life and civilized society, there is decided improvement." My own observations, made six years ago, and again last fall, confirm his statement.



The St. Regis reservation must be excepted from this commendation. The report to the Department, made by a gentleman who visited the people of this reservation last fall, gives a gloomy account of their condition. They subsist chiefly by hunting and fishing, leaving home in summer for long wanderings in the northern wilds of Canada, and returning to their huts to spend the winter in idleness. They have leased their lands to their white neighbors, who have stripped off all the valuable timber, and rather robbed than cultivated the soil. The pittance received for rent is wasted in improvidence. The two schools on this reservation have a hard struggle with the prevailing ignorance and vice.

Your attention is called to the report of the trustees of the Thomas Orphan Asylum, for orphan and destitute Indian children. The undersigned visited that institution, and there found a large number of these children, to whom it is a refuge from extreme suffering and destitution. They are comfortably, though very plainly clad, and furnished with cheap but wholesome food. They are under the care of persons who are religiously devoted to their welfare. The lads are taught how to get their living from the cultivation of the soil; and the girls, how to perform the duties pertaining to a civilized household. As soon as the children of either sex are of sufficient age, employment is found for them among the farmers in the neighboring counties, under whose guidance they continue the habits of industry in which they were trained at the asylum. My predecessor (Mr. VAN DYCK) caused a convenient school-house to be erected, for the special benefit of these children. A school is kept therein, which all attend regularly; and each day's time is divided between manual labor and the study of books. Can this system of training be commended too highly? The child, accustomed to employ each day alternately between manual labor and the study of well-selected books, will be likely to do so in maturer years; thus securing a healthy and enduring physical life, with a constantly cheerful, growing, and fruitful mind. I should

fail to comply with my sense of duty, did I not commend this charitable and economically conducted institution to your special attention and generous support.

The agencies in operation for the preparation of persons to teach, are the State Normal school, teachers' classes in academies and teachers' institutes and associations.

#### STATE NORMAL SCHOOL.

During the past year, embracing the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth terms, two hundred and twenty-five applicants for admission were examined, of whom one hundred and ninety were admitted. The average age is nineteen years and seven months; and the average period during which they had been engaged in teaching, prior to their entrance into the school, was six months.

The whole number in attendance has been two hundred and ninety-three, of whom ninety-nine are males and one hundred and ninety-four females.

The number of graduates of the past year is fifty-four, of whom twenty-two are males and thirty-two females. All the counties but Fulton, Hamilton, Ontario and Tompkins, have been represented in the school during the year, and thirty counties in the graduating class.

The number who have attended for a longer or shorter period, since this school was established, is three thousand eight hundred and fifty-four, of whom one thousand three hundred and thirteen have completed the prescribed course of study.

The annual report of the executive committee will exhibit a detailed statement of the expenses for the year.

Connected with this school are an experimental department, and a model primary department, under the immediate superintendence of excellent teachers. The former numbers one hundred and five pupils, and the price of tuition for admission is twenty-five dollars per year. The latter is composed of pupils between the ages of five and seven years. Forty children between these ages, are in attendance. The tuition fee charged for each is sixteen

dollars per year. These departments are self-sustaining, and the applications for admission to them exceed the number that can be accommodated. They are of importance alike to their pupils, and to the students of the Normal School, for whose special and practical instruction they are designed.

The graduates and under-graduates are represented by local school officers to be doing valuable service, not only in the schools in which they are employed, but as zealous workers, imparting their knowledge of the proper modes of instruction to their associates in teachers' institutes and associations, who in turn apply the same to the schools under their charge, and thus the influence of this school is diffused.

In this connection, I would make honorable mention of Messrs. RODNEY G. KIMBALL and ALBERT N. HUSTED, who were for several years successful and honored teachers in this institution, but who, immediately after the memorable battles before Richmond, resigned their positions, raised a company of volunteers (composed largely of its graduates and students), and with them joined the shattered remnants of the 44th (Ellsworth) Regiment N. Y. S. Volunteers, with whom they have since given evidence of their courage and patriotism on the battle-field. The positions they occupied in the corps of teachers have been filled by other competent persons; and I cheerfully bear witness to the admirable skill and success with which all the teachers in this school are performing their duties.

Wherever institutions of this character have been established and fairly supported, their fruits are too apparent and useful to need commendation; and it is suggested to the Legislature that other normal schools might be established, in localities whose public-spirited inhabitants would furnish, at their own expense, the necessary sites and buildings; and that however efficient one such school may be, it could not have been expected to meet the demands of a State, which requires the employment annually of more than twenty thousand teachers.



## TEACHERS' CLASSES IN ACADEMIES.

An act of the Legislature, passed March 30, 1849, appropriated \$250 per annum to such of the academies as the Regents of the University might designate in the several counties, on condition that, during four months in the year, they should "give gratuitous instruction in the theory and practice of teaching, to at least twenty persons intending to be teachers in the common schools." This act embraces the years 1850 and 1851. By acts passed April 12, 1852, and June 17, 1853, the preceding act was so modified, that the amount allowed for instructing such persons was fixed at \$10 per scholar, to the number of twenty-five. By authority of an act of April 13, 1855, amendatory of the act of 1853, the treasurer is directed to "pay yearly, on the warrant of the Comptroller, out of the income of the United States Deposit or Literature Funds, not otherwise appropriated, to the trustees of all academies selected by the Regents of the University in this State, the sum of ten dollars for each scholar, not to exceed twenty scholars to each academy, instructed under a course prescribed by the Regents of the University, during at least one-third of the academic year, in the science of common school teaching."

By reference to the last general appropriation bill, it will be found that the Legislature appropriated "eighteen thousand dollars for the instruction of common school teachers in the academies;" and the schedule A, accompanying this report, will show the academies which have been selected for that purpose.

The average amount expended annually, under authority of the above acts, is \$16,680 $\frac{1}{3}$  during a period of thirteen academic years; and the average number annually taught, for a period of about fourteen weeks, is 1595 $\frac{8}{13}$ .

It is conceded that this is not the most economical or efficient agency for the preparation of teachers, but so long as the Legislature shall fail to increase the number of normal schools and the appropriation for the support of teachers' institutes, and so long as all the agencies in operation

for the preparation of teachers shall be so inadequate to the urgent demand of the common schools, as they have heretofore been and are now, this appropriation may be properly continued.

#### TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.

No other provision for the instruction of common school teachers has been more successful than these modern organizations; and it is gratifying to be able to report, that the importance of their agency in the successful operation of our school system within the past few years, is universally acknowledged and appreciated. They are now held annually, in nearly every county, for a period of ten days or more, and are composed of persons who are teaching or preparing to teach in the common schools in their respective counties. These institutes are devoted to practical instruction in the most approved methods of imparting knowledge to the young, and of disciplining and awakening their faculties. This method of providing the common schools with teachers, whatever its imperfections, has the advantage, that it affords instruction to persons who give earnest of their interest in the vocation, and who immediately carry back into the schools whatever increase of information and ability they may have derived from the institute.

The aggregate number of teachers thus instructed during the last nine years, is, according to the best information in this Department, more than 45,000, at an average expense of about ninety-one cents for each. Exhibit F, appended to this report, gives the statistics of the institutes held in the State since 1854, and shows that during the year which has just closed, sixty-two have been held, at which 9,444 "teachers and persons preparing themselves to teach common schools during the present school year," were in attendance, at an expense to the State for each, of about ninety-two cents; and that this number is 1,888 more than that for any former year. The number of these institutes visited by either myself or deputy, and by both, was over forty, during the limited time in the autumn within which they

were generally held; and we cordially unite in bearing testimony to the practical utility of the instruction imparted and received in them, to the intelligence and moral worth of their members, and to the untiring and zealous efforts of the School Commissioners in establishing and conducting them to success. These officers report that teachers manifest commendable zeal and tact in incorporating into their modes of discipline, classification and instruction, the suggestions and illustrations received at the institutes, and that the influence upon the schools is marked and salutary.

While commending these temporary normal schools, the undersigned is not unmindful of the fact that they can be and need to be greatly improved in their management and in the instruction given, by supplying them with the most able and accomplished instructors whose services can be secured. There are a few competent gentlemen, a part of whose business is to conduct them, but the number is not nearly equal to the demand, inasmuch as the institutes are, very generally, in session during the short period in the fall between the summer and winter terms of school. The opinion is entertained that the Superintendent of Public Instruction should be authorized to so distribute the time of holding the institutes in the several counties that a few teachers, continuously employed, may, by going from county to county, instruct them all; and it is recommended that he be empowered to employ a corps of the most able and accomplished educators for that purpose.

This plan, in substance, is pursued successfully in other States, and no reason is apparent why it would not be equally effective in this. The additional expenditure would be small, and, in my opinion, it would be justified by immediate and enduring benefits to the schools.

#### TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

These associations are for the encouragement and mutual improvement of their members, and for a generous interchange of ideas, facts and methods pertaining to the instruction of the young.



The State Teachers' Association has been in successful operation since 1845, and numbers among its members the larger part of the efficient, intelligent and zealous educators in the State. Its sessions are annually attended by teachers of our own and sister States, who, in point of character, ability, intelligence and exaltation of purpose, will bear favorable comparison with any other association of persons in this country. To their discussions of topics relating to public instruction, which in their annual meetings, and through the medium of the press, have been generally diffused, especially among teachers and school officers, may be attributed, in part, that more liberal and enlightened public sentiment, which is manifested in the improved condition of the schools. This is a voluntary association, that neither asks nor receives any support from the State. For the purpose of enlarging the sphere of its usefulness, of giving publicity to improvements in the "theory and practice of teaching," and of inciting teachers to cheerful and constant efforts of self-improvement, a monthly educational periodical, called

#### THE NEW YORK TEACHER.

was established in 1852, under its patronage. A board of competent editors are annually appointed by the association, who have the management of its pages. Heretofore, the Legislature has, from year to year, manifested its approval and appreciation of the purposes of the association and of the value of this periodical, by authorizing the Superintendent of Public Instruction to subscribe for copies of the *TEACHER*, and to cause them to be distributed by the School Commissioners, among inexperienced teachers in the several counties; and it is believed that the money expended, in thus coöperating with those who, without reward, are zealously and effectively laboring for the public good, has been wisely invested, and that the subscription should be continued.

Since the creation of the office of School Commissioner, these voluntary associations have been organized and sus-



tained in very many of the towns and counties; and wherever they have met, the people have manifested a commendable interest in them, by participating in their exercises, and by extending to the members a generous hospitality.

#### SCHOOL LAW OF 1856—SUPERVISION.

The success of the school law of 1856, as a whole, and especially that part of it which placed the school moneys in the hands of the supervisors, and created the office of School Commissioner, must be gratifying to those who cherish a lively interest in our school system, as the only means by which the rapidly succeeding generations shall be fitted for the grave duties of citizenship in a republican state. If that law be not perfect in some of its minor details, it has more than fulfilled the cherished anticipations of its projectors. At the close of my former official term in the spring of 1857, the supervisors and the school commissioners had only fairly entered upon their respective duties, and commenced the work of reform. I have now a favorable opportunity of observing the results. The supervisors holding a more responsible official position in the school system than formerly, and having also more frequent intercourse with the school officers and teachers, have, in many instances, become earnestly interested in the prosperity of the schools, and acted an important part in creating a more enlightened public sentiment in regard to them. They have proved themselves to be the proper and safe custodians of the school money; and their character, generally, for integrity, pecuniary responsibility, and business capacity, with the safeguards provided by the law, gives to the people assurance doubly sure against the loss or misapplication of any part of it.

It may be proper to state here the mode of operation of that part of the law relating to the apportionment and distribution of the moneys appropriated by the State. The Superintendent of Public Instruction apportions to each county and city its share of the school moneys, and notifies

the County Clerk and the School Commissioners thereof; and the latter are required to proceed forthwith and apportion to each school district its share of the sum apportioned to the county. The Commissioner (or Commissioners jointly, in counties having more than one) then prepares two copies of his apportionment, and sends one to this Department for examination as to its correctness, and for future reference, and deposits the other with the county treasurer. He also prepares and delivers a certificate to each supervisor, showing him the amount apportioned for teachers' wages, and for library purposes, to each and every school district, *the school-house of which is in his town*. (The only exception to this is where a district lies partly in two counties; in such cases the Commissioner certifies to the supervisor of the town, in which the part of such district lies, the amount apportioned to such joint district, whether the school-house is in his town or not.) The supervisor then presents the certificate made by the Commissioner to the County Treasurer, who has already received from the Commissioner the original apportionment; and upon executing a good and sufficient bond to the treasurer, in behalf of the town, for their safe keeping and disbursement, he receives the school moneys. The supervisor then makes a copy of the certificate of apportionment for his own use, and deposits the original in the town clerk's office, for the inspection of trustees of school districts in his town, or of other persons who may be interested. The Commissioner has, at all times, the means of knowing how much money the trustees have a right to receive of the supervisor. The reports of the trustees made to him each year, in the month of October or November, show whether it has or has not been paid for teachers' wages, upon their order. His certificate of apportionment made to this Department, and his abstract of the reports of trustees, show the same thing; and the vouchers and books kept by the supervisor protect him, in case of dispute. The trustees pay their teachers by giving an order upon the super-

visor, which order is his voucher. There is, indeed, hardly a possibility of any loss or misapplication of the school moneys; and the importance of this will be appreciated when it is considered that more than a million and a quarter of dollars are annually appropriated by the State to the counties.

As was confidently expected, the system of supervision established by that law is demonstrating from year to year its superiority over that which preceded it, and its wise adaptation to the real wants of our common school system. The comparative merits of the two systems have been so thoroughly discussed by former reports from this Department, that it is not deemed necessary to repeat the discussion here. The sum of it is, however, that both in theory and practice, the present system of supervision is the cheaper and the better system in every view comprehending the interests of the schools. It is also true that there is among our people a general acquiescence in the necessity and propriety of it; but so long as, from any cause, there is a single locality not satisfied with it, it may be deemed proper to note the objections, to show that they are entirely unworthy to command the attention of the Legislature.

An objection is raised to the office of School Commissioner, on the ground that poorly qualified men are sometimes elected to it. If the reason given were true to any considerable extent, the objection might be forcible against the wisdom of allowing the people to choose their own school officers; but it is not true to any considerable extent, for a very large proportion of the School Commissioners, are both worthy and competent, and it is believed that, as a body, their fitness for the trust confided to them will compare favorably with the fitness of any equal number of men for other official positions, to which they are either appointed or elected by the people. It should be borne in mind that the objection thus raised is equally applicable to every other office in the State, and that, where justly raised, in regard to Commissioners, it is an unavoidable result of the want of wisdom and foresight on the part of the people



themselves. If the salary allowed to School Commissioners, out of the United States Deposit Fund is not sufficient to command the talent and services which would be satisfactory to the people in any county, the law provides a way by which the board of supervisors may so increase the salary, as to command the best talent in the county. In this respect, therefore, the law is not at fault.

Another objection to the present system is urged, namely: that it is less convenient for the purpose of obtaining certificates of qualification. The proposition stated in its broadest form would read thus: "That is the best system of supervision which affords the cheapest and readiest facilities for obtaining certificates;" a proposition that few will maintain; for if true, it would follow that a still better system would be one not requiring any certificates of qualification at all.

To my mind, it is clear, that if the qualification of teachers is a consideration so important as to demand an examination and a certificate of proper qualification, as a condition precedent to entering a school, then that is the best system of supervision which is the most watchful and careful in its awards of these testimonials; for the greater the ease and facility with which they can be procured, the nearer it is to having no condition whatever; and it is notorious that under the system of town supervision it was reduced to this very state—a large proportion of the licenses being given as a mere form, imposing upon the applicant no conditions of preparation. Under the present system, during every year, the Commissioners hold in their respective districts or counties a Teachers' Institute, which all who teach or design to teach, are expected to attend. At these institutes the Commissioners have the best possible opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of the qualifications of the several teachers; and to those who are fitted by learning and ability, they grant certificates for one or three years, or for specified schools according to their qualifications. If

a teacher is not present at the Institute, it is almost always his own fault, and is an indication of little interest in the improvements in the modes of teaching and governing schools, which are being made from year to year; and the policy of conforming the law to his convenience may well be doubted.

In addition to the opportunity to obtain a certificate at the Institute which all should attend, each Commissioner is directed by this Department to make appointments annually in the several towns within his jurisdiction, where he can examine those teachers, who for any cause, may not have attended the Institute. Furthermore, the Commissioners generally spend one day in each week at their respective residences for the same purpose. I am confident that those who possess the character of a true teacher, who believe that to make thorough preparation, and to teach well are sacred duties, have no unreasonable difficulty in obtaining certificates. Those who desire to enter upon the duties of so high a vocation, without attending the Institutes and Teachers' Associations, and without meeting the Commissioner at his appointed times in the towns, have to seek the Commissioner. It would be well for the children, and but just to the tax-payers, if such persons could not get any certificate. It is a great wrong to place confiding and gifted children under the instruction of those persons who have not interest enough in self-improvement to spend a few days in each year with other teachers for that purpose, while the wrong is still greater to those children that are not gifted. Such persons are easily recognized. They generally assume to despise all agencies which demand their exertions and tend to expose their inefficiency. They favor the system of town supervision, while they would not oppose the policy of having a school officer in every household, with power to grant certificates to its inmates; they would be greatly pleased with a policy requiring no preparation at all for the office of instructor.

Another and kindred objection is still raised by a few, that the Commissioners are too rigorous in the exercise of



their discretion, in refusing certificates. This objection is generally urged by those to whom the Commissioners have refused to grant certificates. In a very few instances they have appealed from the action of the Commissioners, directly to the undersigned; and I have given them a patient and respectful hearing; and, in every instance, the complainants have, themselves, furnished the most indubitable evidences of the correctness of the Commissioner's decision. The danger is not that certificates will be too rigidly withheld, but that they will be too readily granted. The Commissioners are, in this regard, doing a noble work, in which they have my official sanction and support, as they should have of every man who would not see confiding children and youth abused by incompetence, and the money so generously provided by the State, and by local taxation, squandered in paying for the services of persons who do not render an equivalent in instruction. It is well understood that money paid out for the services of a poorly qualified teacher, might as well be cast into the sea; and when the time shall come that the Commissioners shall not be sustained in a policy which demands thorough preparation for the difficult duties of the school-rooms, all our best teachers must leave them to the care of that greater number, who can be employed at a much smaller compensation, and who have neither the disposition, nor the ability to make the necessary preparation to teach well. Or when the time shall come, in which every man, or a great multitude of men, shall have authority to grant certificates, and when the qualified and unqualified alike can obtain them, it will be time to cease taxing the people, and receiving money from their generous hands, under the fraudulent pretence that it will be economically used for the education of children and youth.

#### RETROSPECTION AND NEW SUGGESTIONS.

When the undersigned was first elected Superintendent of Public Instruction, in the spring of 1854, the people of the State had just passed through a long, spirited. and

bitter contest, over the free school law. This law, after being twice submitted to the decision of their ballots, had triumphed over all opposition, but was modified in 1851 as a concession to its opponents, by the substitution of an annual general tax of \$800,000, with a rate bill to make up local deficiencies, in place of county and town taxation. He found the schools in the towns committed to the local supervision of town superintendents, many of whom were worthy men; but they were generally paid so small a compensation that those who were qualified could not afford to devote the necessary time and attention to the schools, and the means for their improvement, to insure an economical and effective expenditure of the liberal appropriations made by the State. They were elected annually, and their tenure of office was subject to the fluctuations of local politics. No sooner had one become acquainted with his duties than his term of office expired, and his successor had to go through the same apprenticeship. Every year, therefore, a large proportion of the schools were in charge of inexperienced officers; and the only wonder was that they were able to do as well as they did.

The annual meetings of the several school districts were held at any time, in the discretion of each of the eleven thousand districts. Although legal notice of such meetings was required to be given, it was seldom done; and the absentees, and those dissatisfied with any proceeding, were always ready, and when taxation was proposed, more than willing to raise the question of legality, and to claim that they were aggrieved by the hasty or unfair action of the majority of their neighbors, at a meeting of which no proper notice had been given, or of which they had forgotten the time of holding. This was a source of endless litigation and strife among the inhabitants of the districts. The expenditure of the public money could not be satisfactorily accounted for. In many instances the town auditors did not know either the amount apportioned to their respective towns, or the sum that had been paid out according to law. The reports to this Department of the moneys received and

expended, during any given year, differed very largely. The reports of trustees and town superintendents were made up for different periods, so that receipts and expenditures were confounded, and the entire school statistics were a confused and contradictory mass of figures. Teachers' institutes and associations, which, under the previous system of supervision, had rendered invaluable service in preparing teachers for schools, had been substantially abandoned, and the schools outside of some of the cities and flourishing villages were simply *kept*.

In his first annual report, dated December 31st, 1854, and again in the second, the Superintendent urged upon the Legislature certain amendments to the school laws, among which were the following:

FIRST—That the annual meetings of all the school districts should be held on a fixed and uniform day early in October.

SECOND—That for all purposes, the school year should be regarded as terminating with the 30th day of September of each year, and that all statistics, financial or otherwise, should have reference to that year.

THIRD—"That the statistics be reported directly to this Department, by the school officers qualified for the duty of digesting them."

FOURTH—That the "one-third apportionment to districts" should be based upon the number of teachers actually employed for a given time; and that this should be the rule for the enumeration of districts, at least in cities and villages, where no territorial division by districts existed.

FIFTH—That the law for the establishment of union free schools be amended, and that its principle be so extended as to permit any district to levy a tax for the purpose of defraying teachers' wages.

SIXTH—That school districts be made *quasi corporations*, like towns, and be enabled to sue and be sued in their corporate name and character.

SEVENTH—That "provision be made for the election of Superintendents" (School Commissioners) "for each county



or assembly district, with sufficient compensation to secure the devotion by capable and zealous men of their whole energies to the work of local supervision."

EIGHTH—That the financial part of the school system should be separated from that of supervision, and that the supervisors should be made the custodians of the school money, and be required to give bonds in behalf of their respective towns for its safe keeping and lawful disbursement.

NINTH—That the state tax for the support of schools be made three-quarters of a mill on each dollar of the assessed valuation of property, so that the proceeds should keep pace with the wealth of the State and the number of children to be educated.

TENTH—That the number of school district officers be reduced, by the election of one trustee instead of three.

ELEVENTH—That there be three grades of certificates, which shall show to trustees the comparative qualifications of teachers.

TWELFTH—That the provisions for the education and civilization of the Indians should be based upon a plan comprehending regularity of appropriations and efficiency in their expenditure.

THIRTEENTH—That more ample provision be made for a supply of competent teachers, by establishing more normal schools and by extending a liberal support to teachers' institutes.

FOURTEENTH—That the school laws should be revised, systematized and simplified, and re-enacted in one law, so as to form a "Code of Public Instruction."

Of the above recommendations, those relating to the time of holding the annual meetings, the termination of the school year, the reporting of statistics directly to this Department, the change in the basis of the "one-third apportionment," the abolition of the office of town superintendent and the election of school commissioners, the separation of the financial part of the system from that of supervision by authorizing the supervisors to receive and



disburse the school moneys, the increase of the State tax to three-fourths of a mill on each dollar of valuation, the reduction of school district officers by electing one instead of three trustees, the gradation of teachers' certificates, the education of the Indians, and the encouragement and more liberal support of teachers' institutes, have since been approved by successive legislatures and carried into effect. Of the beneficial results of the change in the system of the State taxation, of the appointment of the supervisors as intelligent and trustworthy custodians of the school moneys, of the election and compensation of school commissioners, of the provision for the education of the Indians, and of the encouragement of teachers' institutes, the undersigned has herein before spoken. It needs only to be added here that in the financial and statistical reports to this Department, order has been brought out of confusion; and the number of alterations of school districts, out of which grew innumerable appeals to this Department and much costly litigation in the courts, has been greatly reduced, since the power to make such alterations was taken from a thousand hands and given to a hundred and twelve. The desired reduction in the number of school district officers has not been fully effected, though a very large number of districts have adopted the policy of one trustee, and the propriety of the reduction from three to one is gaining favor among the people. The changes noted have tended to harmonize, simplify and vitalize the working of the school system.

In some minor particulars the school laws might be further amended, so as to remove obscurities in their construction, and simplify the mode of action under them; but radical alterations are not recommended. Such needed emendations as are desirable have been shown in the decisions of the courts, and more clearly in the "Code of Public Instruction." They have been too frequently presented to the Legislature in former reports from this Department, to require specification in this. The undersigned will prepare those which he deems essential, and submit them to the proper

committee; and in their preparation, he will keep in view the propriety of making changes in these laws gradually, so that the school officers and the people generally may conform their action to them with the least possible trouble.

It would, indeed, be a completion of the "schedule of desiderata" in regard to these laws, if they could be carefully revised, properly classified under appropriate heads, and combined into one act. They have not been revised since 1847, and then the revision was not carefully done. Since that time, the repeal of old laws, and the enactment of new ones conformably to later and more advanced conditions of public instruction, render a complete revision at least worthy of consideration.

This brief review of former suggestions now enacted into laws, and the present suggestion as to the propriety of further minor amendments, and of a complete revision, classification and re-enactment of the school laws in a compact body, are made in the confident hope that the Legislature will be glad to learn of the progress of the school system towards completion within the past few years, and that they will be willing to adopt such further practical measures as will render it still more efficient, and as nearly perfect as is possible for human wisdom.

There is no substantial ground for complaining of the alterations in the school laws. In their most important features, they remain as they were thirty years ago. The laws relating to banks and banking, to insurance, to courts and the judiciary, to corporations of all kinds, and even the general election laws, have been more frequently altered and amended and subjected to more radical changes than the school laws. The laws in regard to schools in the cities may be an exception to this statement; but the necessity of the special acts for the cities may be attributed in part to the fact, that the improvement of the general school laws had not kept pace with the rapidly changing condition and growing wants of the cities.

And, finally, the expectation that school laws, any more than laws upon any other important subject, will not be liable

to disputed construction, indicates undue faith in human wisdom. Before such an expectation can be rationally entertained, school officers must all think alike, form the same judgments, and always act honestly and discreetly.

#### CONCLUSION.

Of the long line of intelligent men who have honored the country by their learning and ability, manifested in the most important and exalted positions, ALL have set their seal of approbation upon the measures which have been instituted for the general diffusion of knowledge and the promotion of virtue among their fellow men. They have iterated and reiterated the duty and necessity of making ample provision for the education of the generations of a free people ; and the people of this State, in obedience to their admonitions and counsels, have, by legislative and private munificence, established colleges, academies, and common schools, in which the millions have been qualified for the enjoyment of rational liberty and for the exercise of privileges as citizens, that in other States of the world are denied to all but a favored few. Whatever, therefore, be our condition, whether in peace or in war, in prosperity or in adversity, the policy thus sanctioned and prolific of good results, can be neither innocently nor safely neglected.

V. M. RICE,

*Superintendent of Public Instruction.*





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# DOCUMENTS

ACCOMPANYING THE REPORT OF THE SUPERINTEN-  
DENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

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TABLE 1.

STATEMENT of the State Tax of Three-Fourths of a Mill, levied in 1858, by chap. 180 of the Laws of 1856, according to the valuation of the Real and Personal Estate by the Town Assessors, and in 1862, as equalized by the State Assessors.

COUNTIES.	In 1858.		In 1862.	
	Valuation.	Amount of tax.	Valuation.	Amount of tax.
Albany .....	\$39,241,648	\$29,431 24	\$39,354,490	\$29,515 87
Allegany .....	9,005,907	6,754 43	9,269,046	6,951 78
Broome .....	7,558,308	5,668 73	9,012,963	6,759 72
Cattaraugus .....	7,496,380	5,622 23	8,574,454	6,430 84
Cayuga .....	19,554,754	14,666 07	21,942,079	16,456 56
Chautauqua .....	14,819,090	11,114 32	14,208,799	10,656 60
Chemung .....	7,219,012	5,414 26	7,078,341	5,308 76
Chenango .....	11,298,141	8,473 61	10,412,793	7,809 59
Clinton .....	6,310,674	4,733 00	5,929,031	4,446 77
Columbia .....	14,552,349	10,914 26	21,714,722	16,266 04
Cortland .....	5,821,167	4,365 87	6,541,188	4,905 89
Delaware .....	8,672,675	6,504 50	7,826,163	5,869 62
Dutchess .....	28,870,074	21,652 55	33,857,806	25,393 35
Erie .....	50,170,619	37,627 97	46,538,000	34,903 50
Essex .....	4,548,079	3,411 06	3,348,442	2,511 33
Franklin .....	4,371,510	3,278 63	4,195,271	3,146 45
Fulton .....	4,358,122	3,268 59	4,152,490	3,114 37
Genesee .....	13,118,493	9,838 87	13,075,604	9,806 70
Greene .....	7,377,756	5,533 32	8,240,459	6,180 34
Hamilton .....	474,755	356 07	630,266	472 70
Herkimer .....	10,316,833	7,737 62	11,144,484	8,358 36
Jefferson .....	16,192,864	12,144 65	16,566,882	12,425 16
Kings .....	104,296,566	78,222 42	93,231,884	69,923 91
Lewis .....	4,175,000	3,131 25	5,279,275	3,959 46
Livingston .....	14,734,707	11,051 03	18,357,339	13,768 00
Madison .....	11,686,942	8,765 20	13,231,535	9,961 15
Monroe .....	28,781,527	21,586 15	29,607,232	22,205 42
Montgomery .....	8,782,486	6,586 86	9,442,013	7,081 51
New York .....	531,222,642	398,416 98	549,624,306	412,218 23
Niagara .....	13,774,764	10,331 07	15,414,219	11,560 66
Oneida .....	16,864,140	12,648 10	24,709,962	18,532 47
Onondaga .....	28,145,028	21,108 77	26,301,687	19,726 27
Ontario .....	17,744,984	13,308 74	19,768,497	14,826 37
Orange .....	25,605,331	19,204 00	25,855,071	19,391 30
Orleans .....	10,592,223	7,944 17	10,764,583	8,073 44
Oswego .....	14,929,869	11,197 40	12,226,322	9,169 74
Otsego .....	12,063,554	9,047 67	12,407,330	9,305 50
Putnam .....	5,155,760	3,866 82	5,272,966	3,954 73
Queens .....	19,930,770	14,948 08	21,178,286	15,883 71
Rensselaer .....	26,674,215	20,005 66	31,153,496	23,365,12
Richmond .....	7,437,318	5,577 99	5,727,740	4,295 81
Rockland .....	5,533,985	4,150 49	6,028,034	4,521 03
St. Lawrence .....	17,037,831	12,778 37	15,052,841	11,239 63
Saratoga .....	11,932,166	8,949 12	12,345,230	9,258 92
Schenectady .....	5,715,286	4,286 46	7,126,992	5,345 24
Schoharie .....	6,532,814	4,899 61	7,055,559	5,291 67
Schuyler .....	4,807,662	3,605 75	5,507,239	4,130 47
Seneca .....	10,662,940	7,997 21	10,875,074	8,156 31

TABLE 1.—Continued.

COUNTIES.	In 1858.		In 1862.	
	Valuation.	Amount of tax.	Valuation.	Amount of tax.
Steuben .....	\$14,978,432	\$11,233 82	\$12,932,122	\$9,699 09
Suffolk .....	10,972,106	8,229 08	8,548,972	6,411 73
Sullivan .....	4,276,586	3,207 44	4,757,745	3,568 31
Tioga .....	5,634,893	4,226 17	7,285,346	5,464 01
Tompkins .....	7,481,838	5,611 38	8,715,849	6,536 89
Ulster .....	15,509,818	11,632 36	14,834,426	11,125 82
Warren .....	2,575,761	1,931 82	2,143,459	1,607 59
Washington .....	15,976,169	11,982 13	16,431,774	12,323 83
Wayne .....	14,480,481	10,860 36	16,536,115	12,402 09
Westchester .....	39,563,401	29,672 55	41,185,997	30,889 50
Wyoming .....	8,525,234	6,393 93	10,229,568	7,672 18
Yates .....	7,660,589	5,745 44	8,494,038	6,370 53
Total .....	\$1,403,805,024	\$1,052,853 75	\$1,449,303,948	\$1,086,977 94



TABLE 2.

STATEMENT showing the amount of School Tax paid by each County, the amount of such Tax received back, the amount of the Common School Fund, and the total amount received by each County.

COUNTIES.	School tax paid.	School tax received.	Common School Fund rec'd.	Total amount received.
Albany .....	\$29,515 87	\$27,709 58	\$7,557 12	\$35,266 70
Allegany .....	6,951 78	14,320 17	3,143 72	17,463 89
Broome .....	6,759 72	12,223 08	2,690 88	14,913 96
Cattaraugus .....	6,430 84	14,567 20	3,222 47	17,789 67
Cayuga .....	16,456 56	17,061 62	3,836 29	20,897 91
Chautauqua .....	10,656 60	18,666 22	4,160 29	22,826 51
Chemung .....	5,308 76	8,497 01	1,896 98	10,393 99
Chenango .....	7,809 59	14,501 58	3,168 83	17,670 41
Clinton .....	4,446 77	13,317 85	3,025 83	16,343 68
Columbia .....	16,286 04	13,516 69	3,081 72	16,598 41
Cortland .....	4,905 89	9,227 80	2,019 92	11,247 72
Delaware .....	5,869 62	15,896 43	3,439 45	19,335 88
Dutchess .....	25,393 35	18,057 29	4,144 24	22,201 53
Erie .....	34,903 50	38,578 48	9,899 81	48,478 29
Essex .....	2,511 33	9,586 10	2,111 12	11,697 22
Franklin .....	3,146 45	9,913 82	2,206 86	12,120 68
Fulton .....	3,114 37	7,281 76	1,642 43	8,924 19
Genesee .....	9,806 70	9,611 55	2,172 13	11,783 68
Greene .....	6,180 34	9,932 94	2,225 79	12,158 73
Hamilton .....	472 70	1,234 41	263 21	1,497 62
Herkimer .....	8,358 36	12,490 99	2,804 79	15,295 78
Jefferson .....	12,425 16	22,457 86	4,998 78	27,456 64
Kings .....	69,923 91	63,640 88	18,319 60	81,960 43
Lewis .....	3,959 46	9,839 25	2,161 49	12,000 74
Livingston .....	13,768 00	12,236 88	2,740 09	14,976 97
Madison .....	9,961 15	14,110 75	3,136 18	17,246 93
Monroe .....	22,205 42	26,846 47	6,719 61	33,566 08
Montgomery .....	7,081 51	8,948 74	2,035 07	10,983 81
New York .....	412,218 23	195,651 15	54,965 84	250,616 99
Niagara .....	11,560 66	14,303 75	3,267 97	17,571 72
Oneida .....	18,532 47	31,347 23	7,087 33	38,434 56
Onondaga .....	19,726 27	26,212 13	6,464 93	32,677 06
Ontario .....	14,826 37	15,561 29	3,052 61	16,613 90
Orange .....	19,391 30	16,968 52	3,933 95	20,902 47
Orleans .....	8,073 44	8,640 13	1,949 49	10,589 62
Oswego .....	9,169 74	22,516 31	5,096 32	27,612 63
Otsego .....	9,305 50	16,892 80	3,726 48	20,619 28
Putnam .....	3,954 73	4,114 90	933 07	5,047 97
Queens .....	15,883 71	13,783 07	3,274 39	17,057 46
Rensselaer .....	23,365 12	23,203 69	5,866 26	29,069 95
Richmond .....	4,295 81	5,843 14	1,404 63	7,247 77
Rockland .....	4,521 03	5,283 31	1,262 13	6,545 44
St. Lawrence .....	11,289 63	27,124 70	6,028 36	33,153 06
Saratoga .....	9,258 92	15,453 12	3,491 94	18,945 06
Schenectady .....	5,345 24	5,627 44	1,288 16	6,915 60
Schoharie .....	5,291 67	11,284 78	2,503 06	13,787 84
Schuyler .....	4,130 47	6,196 19	1,373 14	7,569 33
Seneca .....	8,156 31	8,000 64	1,827 16	9,827 80
Steuben .....	9,699 09	21,549 17	4,792 10	26,341 27
Suffolk .....	6,411 73	11,888 29	2,735 82	14,624 11

TABLE 2.—Continued.

COUNTIES.	School tax paid.	School tax received.	Common School Fund rec'd.	Total amount received.
Sullivan .....	\$3,568 31	\$9,971 63	\$2,239 16	\$12,210 79
Tioga .....	5,464 01	9,366 21	2,078 77	11,444 98
Tompkins .....	6,536 89	9,954 25	2,221 66	12,172 91
Ulster .....	11,125 82	19,729 97	4,605 18	24,335 15
Warren .....	1,607 59	7,188 61	1,587 06	8,775 67
Washington .....	12,323 83	14,435 44	3,227 62	17,663 06
Wayne .....	12,402 09	14,759 05	3,311 76	18,070 81
Westchester .....	30,889 50	24,509 12	5,785 64	30,294 76
Wyoming .....	7,672 18	10,471 49	2,322 42	12,793 91
Yates .....	6,370 53	6,623 51	1,470 89	8,099 40
From last year's tax.	584 96	.....	.....	.....
Indians .....	.....	832 47	.....	832 47
Totals .....	\$1,087,562 90	\$1,087,562 90	\$264,000 00	\$1,351,562 90

TABLE 3.

## APPORTIONMENT OF SCHOOL MONIES FOR 1862-3.

## SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

57

COUNTIES AND CITIES.	Population.	No. of teachers employed for six months.	APPORTIONMENT FOR TEACHERS' WAGES.		Libraries.	Total.
			District quota.	According to population.		
Albany, city.....	62,367	109	\$2,723 00	\$14,716 90*	\$883 90	\$18,323 80
towns.....	51,549	178	4,874 70†	11,337 61	730 59	16,942 90
Allegany.....	41,881	280	7,659 09††	9,211 24	593 56	17,463 89
Broome.....	35,906	239	6,507 97	7,897 11	508 88	14,913 96
Cattaraugus.....	43,886	276	7,515 48	9,652 22	621 97	17,789 67
Cayuga, Auburn.....	10,986	26	707 98	2,416 24	155 70	3,279 92
towns.....	44,781	262	7,134 26	9,849 07	634 66	17,617 99
Chautauqua.....	58,422	336	9,149 28	12,849 24	827 99	22,826 51
Chemung.....	26,917	150	4,092 42†	5,920 09	381 48	10,393 99
Chenango.....	40,934	297	8,087 31	9,002 96	580 14	17,670 41
Clinton.....	45,735	207	5,636 61	10,058 89	648 18	16,343 68
Columbia, Hudson.....	7,187	17	462 91	1,580 70	101 86	2,145 47
towns.....	39,985	187	5,092 01	8,794 24	566 69	14,452 94
Cortland.....	26,294	187	5,092 01	5,783 06	372 65	11,247 72
Delaware.....	42,465	345	9,394 35	9,339 69	601 84	19,335 88
Dutchess, Poughkeepsie.....	14,726	38	1,034 74	3,238 81	208 72	4,482 27
Erie, Buffalo.....	50,215	219	5,863 37	11,044 21	711 68	17,719 26
towns.....	81,129	221	6,017 83	18,843 39*	1,149 82	26,011 04
Essex.....	80,842	302	8,223 46	13,381 50	862 29	22,467 25
Franklin.....	28,214	187	5,092 01	6,205 34	399 87	11,697 22
Fulton.....	30,837	180	4,901 40	6,782 24	437 04	12,120 68
Genesee.....	24,162	120	3,267 60	5,314 15	342 44	8,924 19
Greene.....	32,189	156	4,247 88	7,079 60	456 20	11,783 68
Hamilton.....	31,930	172	4,683 56	7,022 61	452 53	12,158 73
Herkimer.....	3,024	29	789 67	665 09	42 86	1,497 62
Jefferson.....	40,561	213	5,799 99	8,920 93	574 86	15,295 78
Kings, Brooklyn.....	69,825	408	11,109 84	15,357 20	989 60	27,456 64
towns.....	266,661	480	13,070 40	61,649 01*	3,779 22	78,498 63
Lewis.....	12,461	20	544 60	2,740 65	176 60	3,461 85
towns.....	28,580	195	5,309 85	6,285 84	405 05	12,000 74

TABLE 3.—Continued.

COUNTIES AND CITIES.	Population.	No. of teachers employed for six months.	APPORTIONMENT FOR TEACHERS' WAGES.		Libraries.	Total.
			District quota.	According to population.		
Livingston .....	39,546	209	\$5,718 83†	\$8,097 67	\$560 47	\$14,976 97
Madison .....	43,545	259	7,052 57	9,577 22	617 14	17,246 93
Monroe, Rochester .....	48,294	106	2,886 38	11,101 92*	683 17	14,671 47
towns .....	52,444	243	6,616 89	11,534 45	743 27	18,894 61
Montgomery .....	30,866	138	3,757 74	6,788 62	437 45	10,983 81
New York .....	813,689	1,896	51,628 08	187,457 13*	11,531 78	250,616 99
Niagara .....	50,399	212	5,772 76	11,084 68	714 28	17,571 72
Oneida, Utica .....	82,673	30	2,178 40	4,954 99	319 30	7,452 69
towns .....	82,673	427	11,627 21	18,182 97	1,171 69	30,981 87
Onondaga, Syracuse .....	28,119	86	2,341 78	6,684 45*	398 52	9,424 75
towns .....	62,567	316	8,604 68	13,760 89	886 74	23,252 31
Ontario .....	62,567	227	6,181 21	9,801 12	631 57	16,613 90
Orange .....	63,812	219	5,963 37	14,034 72	904 38	20,902 47
Orleans .....	28,717	142	3,866 66	6,315 97	406 99	10,589 62
Oswego, city .....	16,816	50	1,361 50	3,698 48	238 33	5,298 31
towns .....	59,142	311	8,468 53	13,007 60	838 19	22,314 32
Otsego .....	50,157	326	8,876 98	11,031 45	710 85	20,619 28
Putnam .....	14,002	65	1,769 95	3,079 58	198 44	5,047 97
Queens .....	57,391	133	3,621 59	12,622 49	813 38	17,057 46
Rensselaer, Troy .....	39,235	104	2,831 92	9,129 29*	556 06	12,517 27
towns .....	47,093	203	5,527 69	10,357 56	697 43	16,552 68
Richmond .....	25,492	47	1,279 81	5,606 67	361 29	7,247 77
Rockland .....	22,492	47	1,279 81	4,946 86	318 77	6,545 44
St. Lawrence .....	83,689	498	13,560 54	18,406 43	1,186 09	33,153 06
Saratoga .....	51,729	251	6,834 73	11,377 20	733 13	18,945 06
Schenectady, city .....	9,579	28	762 44	2,106 79	135 76	3,004 99
towns .....	10,423	54	1,470 42	2,292 47	147 72	3,910 61
Schoharie .....	34,469	210	5,718 30	7,581 02	488 52	13,787 84
Schuyler .....	116	116	3,158 68	4,143 64	207 01	7,569 33
Seneca .....	28,138	119	3,240 37	6,188 63	398 80	9,827 80
Steuben .....	66,689	394	10,728 62	14,667 48	945 17	26,341 27
Suffolk .....	43,275	165	4,492 95	9,517 84	613 32	14,624 11



Sullivan.....	32,385	170	4,629 10	7,122 71	458 98	12,210 79
Tioga.....	28,748	173	4,714 75†	6,322 79	407 44	11,444 98
Tompkins.....	31,409	177	4,819 71	6,908 05	445 15	12,172 91
Ulster.....	76,381	237	6,453 51	16,799 12	1,082 52	24,335 15
Warren.....	21,434	138	3,757 74	4,714 16	303 77	8,775 67
Washington.....	45,904	254	6,916 42	10,096 06	650 58	17,663 06
Wayne.....	47,762	253	6,889 19	10,504 70	676 92	18,070 81
Westchester.....	99,497	257	7,001 41†	21,883 22	1,410 13	30,294 76
Wyoming.....	31,968	195	5,309 85	7,030 99	458 07	12,793 91
Yates.....	20,280	123	3,349 29	4,462 55	287 56	8,099 40
Indians.....	3,785	.....	.....	832 47	.....	832 47
	3,884,518	15,685	\$427,207 94	\$869,354 96*	\$55,000 00	\$1,351,562 90

NOTE.—Contingent apportionment of \$4.29 to separate neighborhood in Westchester county, not included in the above.

\* This includes the amount apportioned on account of supervision. † This includes \$27.76 for "quota" due one town last year.

‡ This includes amount apportioned on account of "separate neighborhood."

TABLE 4.

ABSTRACT of the Statistical Reports of the School Commissioners of the State of New York, for the year ending September 30, 1862.

COUNTIES.	No. of district.	No. of teachers employed at the same time for six months.	No. of children between 4 and 21.	No. of free schools.	No. of private schools.	No. of pupils attending private schools.	TIME SCHOOL WAS KEPT.				TEACHERS.				
							Whole time.		By qualified teachers.		LICENSED BY			MALES.	FEMALES.
							Months.	Days.	Months.	Days.	Local Officers.	State Sup't.	Normal School.		
Albany.....	171	278	41,842	79	93	6,625	1,582	6	1,580	23	380	14	70	157	261
Allegany.....	263	280	16,389	....	18	285	1,750	4	1,750	4	379	7	..	127	414
Broome.....	211	239	14,068	110	13	655	1,449	2	1,441	2	435	10	..	106	339
Cattaraugus.....	268	276	16,221	....	16	302	1,945	12	1,940	19	573	4	..	135	443
Cayuga.....	246	288	17,916	19	13	279	1,958	4	1,958	4	509	17	7	185	351
Chemung.....	307	336	20,996	2	18	420	2,181	9	2,180	24	658	17	3	195	483
Chautauqua.....	114	150	11,147	26	14	341	736	7	734	12	238	3	1	70	202
Chenango.....	289	297	14,298	....	14	307	2,075	19	2,075	19	606	21	..	189	438
Clinton.....	196	207	20,940	....	17	373	1,280	25	1,276	25	387	2	..	95	294
Columbia.....	185	204	16,413	4	35	793	1,669	24	1,596	19	330	11	1	127	215
Cortland.....	182	187	9,224	....	8	196	1,302	3	1,302	3	345	16	2	94	269
Delaware.....	343	345	15,893	1	6	170	2,289	..	2,289	..	475	..	..	143	509
Dutchess.....	217	257	23,283	16	59	1,221	1,912	17	1,912	17	392	9	9	133	287
Essex.....	325	523	54,551	34	41	3,115	2,435	23	2,435	23	753	38	9	195	602
Franklin.....	188	187	11,246	....	13	288	1,244	15	1,233	24	362	5	1	88	280
Fulton.....	170	180	12,951	10	10	225	1,256	9	1,256	9	341	1	..	86	257
Genesee.....	113	120	9,555	....	8	183	853	18	853	18	227	5	..	97	137
Greene.....	144	156	10,708	1	17	335	1,132	9	1,125	17	296	6	1	96	207
Hamilton.....	164	172	11,967	1	23	455	1,553	22	1,350	18	313	6	2	108	212
Herkimer.....	32	29	1,146	....	....	....	201	25	201	25	54	..	..	7	47
Jefferson.....	193	213	14,108	2	14	338	1,373	6	1,372	6	379	5	..	147	437
Kings.....	375	408	25,973	....	20	796	2,681	22	2,681	22	777	10	9	234	572
Lewis.....	106	500	74,015	97	70	1,905	1,263	8	1,263	8	94	44	9	44	457
	192	195	11,178	22	10	326	1,307	18	1,307	18	362	3	1	78	188

Livingston.....	191	209	14,075	1	28	575	1,497	..	1,497	..	383	9	..	119	273
Madison .....	237	259	15,253	2	15	338	1,732	8	1,707	15	488	13	5	142	364
Monroe .....	245	349	35,437	17	40	3,011	2,107	5	2,105	12	562	11	2	174	402
Montgomery .....	120	138	12,475	6	9	210	1,160	23	1,160	23	115	31	4	108	120
New York .....	1,896	250,000	103	...	...	...	1,133	..	1,133	..	1,684	191	21	196	1,700
Niagara .....	164	212	18,959	16	22	995	1,309	4	1,308	10	354	12	2	126	242
Oneida .....	405	507	38,435	21	60	1,925	3,041	16	3,041	2	560	11	6	263	579
Onondaga.....	298	402	23,520	14	24	1,551	2,324	7	2,324	7	654	36	7	188	508
Ontario .....	207	227	15,578	3	18	371	1,686	23	1,680	20	399	18	3	135	286
Orange .....	188	219	23,315	1	57	1,627	1,597	2	1,593	2	353	5	12	152	218
Orleans.....	129	142	20,266	...	9	346	1,013	12	1,012	..	282	4	1	107	180
Oswego .....	310	361	28,079	21	19	643	2,359	16	2,349	20	635	18	14	181	486
Otsego .....	319	326	17,844	1	27	694	2,234	13	2,234	8	624	7	2	223	416
Putnam .....	61	65	5,250	...	21	389	549	15	548	..	114	1	3	51	67
Queens .....	79	133	20,262	15	73	1,935	811	10	811	10	153	7	9	74	100
Rensselaer.....	215	307	31,795	30	43	906	1,774	14	1,767	13	437	23	5	151	315
Richmond.....	24	47	9,370	7	33	794	235	25	235	25	51	2	3	33	29
Rockland .....	41	47	7,465	1	26	460	373	22	373	22	73	..	6	52	27
St. Lawrence.....	471	498	33,403	19	54	1,301	3,221	12	3,213	9	937	3	..	243	742
Saratoga.....	223	251	18,719	3	26	555	1,763	2	1,763	2	326	18	1	159	310
Schenectady .....	63	82	7,060	8	5	85	531	3	529	3	123	2	5	52	78
Schoharie.....	205	210	13,725	1	9	221	1,640	..	1,635	..	390	16	1	175	232
Schuyler.....	113	116	6,801	...	6	154	957	17	957	17	221	2	..	83	139
Seneca.....	103	119	10,338	4	17	404	846	6	830	2	204	11	5	84	136
Steuben .....	364	394	26,104	4	11	349	2,578	5	2,577	18	763	11	3	210	567
Suffolk .....	145	165	15,494	...	62	1,348	1,218	3	1,204	9	256	10	3	109	160
Sullivan .....	167	170	13,458	11	18	547	1,236	..	1,220	..	336	1	..	87	250
Tioga.....	164	173	9,808	...	15	511	1,123	11	1,123	..	335	..	..	98	247
Tompkins.....	162	177	11,219	1	13	345	1,363	8	1,363	8	320	12	..	97	235
Ulster.....	217	237	27,906	6	41	1,104	1,934	19	1,920	15	371	18	4	131	264
Warren .....	135	138	8,516	...	12	230	943	1	940	19	244	3	..	66	201
Washington.....	238	254	16,428	...	33	650	1,778	1	1,773	17	479	11	..	152	338
Wayne.....	218	253	17,402	2	17	265	1,756	19	1,736	19	472	16	4	153	339
Westchester.....	156	257	32,900	54	114	2,217	1,429	22	1,415	18	311	20	24	118	237
Wyoming.....	182	195	11,541	13	13	359	1,247	7	1,247	24	381	2	..	99	284
Yates.....	107	123	7,293	...	7	226	809	14	809	14	224	4	5	78	143
Total in State.....	11,763	15,685	1,322,823	809	1,537	47,374	90,546	1	90,288	25	24,279	813	286	7,585	18,915

TABLE 4.—Continued.

CITIES.	TIME SCHOOL WAS KEPT.						TEACHERS.				FEMALES.				
	No. of district.	No. of teachers employed at the same time for six months.	No. of children, between 4 and 21.	No. of free schools.	No. of private schools.	No. of pupils attending private schools.	Whole time.		By qualified teachers.			LICENSED BY			MALES.
							Months.	Days.	Months.	Days.		Local Officers.	State Sup't.	Normal School.	
Albany .....	17	100	22,298	15	71	5,226	204	..	204	..	98	..	48	18	82
Auburn .....	5	26	3,472	5	3	110	52	13	52	13	17	8	1	5	21
Hudson .....	4	17	2,383	4	9	450	40	..	40	..	15	2	..	4	13
Poughkeepsie .....	10	38	5,345	10	8	500	120	..	120	..	36	..	2	4	34
Buffalo .....	34	221	30,653	34	20	2,500	342	24	342	24	186	29	6	28	180
Brooklyn .....	92	480	69,849	92	53	1,625	1,104	..	1,104	..	480	38	8	26	452
Rochester .....	17	106	17,014	17	25	2,720	176	14	176	14	97	8	1	14	93
New York .....	103	1,896	250,000	103	..	....	1,133	..	1,133	..	1,684	191	21	196	1,700
Utica .....	13	80	8,000	21	15	600	130	..	130	..	43	2	4	7	42
Syracuse .....	14	86	11,008	14	12	1,271	140	..	140	..	62	21	5	6	80
Oswego .....	21	50	6,660	21	3	318	190	16	190	16	36	4	10	5	45
Troy .....	28	104	14,082	28	..	....	280	..	280	..	101	1	2	15	89
Schenectady .....	8	28	3,062	8	4	50	74	12	72	12	23	2	5	4	26
Total in cities .....	366	3,232	443,826	372	223	15,370	3,986	1	3,986	1	2,878	306	113	334	2,867
Total in rural districts ...	11,397	12,453	878,997	437	1,314	32,004	86,560	..	86,302	24	21,401	507	173	7,251	16,048



TABLE 4.—Continued.

COUNTIES.	NUMBER OF CHILDREN TAUGHT.						No. of Inspectors by Commissioner.	No. of volumes in district library.	SCHOOL HOUSES.			
	Less than 2 months.	2 months and less than 4.	4 months and less than 6.	6 months and less than 8.	8 months and less than 10.	10 months and over.			Log.	Framed.	Brick.	Stone.
TOTAL.												TOTAL.
Albany.....	5,649	5,199	3,724	2,550	1,953	1,427	276	25,177	..	130	42	7
Allegany.....	3,747	4,494	2,792	1,952	117	30	417	18,428	5	257	..	1
Broome.....	2,587	3,545	2,520	1,227	301	195	393	14,597	4	210	6	1
Cattaraugus.....	3,911	4,212	2,978	1,129	430	....	388	19,612	13	252	2	..
Cayuga.....	3,174	4,391	2,907	2,074	846	357	462	13,479	..	203	29	14
Chautauque.....	3,468	5,285	3,976	2,073	228	41	476	27,929	..	4	4	2
Chemung.....	2,144	2,405	1,777	1,078	516	110	73	9,837	5	114	2	..
Chenango.....	2,970	4,061	2,756	1,201	129	....	498	26,029	1	284	..	2
CClinton.....	3,648	3,578	2,300	1,576	251	161	244	15,339	26	121	38	16
Columbia.....	2,100	2,529	2,146	1,480	893	525	283	18,290	..	174	11	..
Cortland.....	1,877	2,558	1,709	828	81	....	407	15,082	2	172	3	5
Delaware.....	3,129	3,827	2,682	1,256	286	6	491	23,037	..	338	1	..
Dutchess.....	2,583	3,006	2,539	1,968	1,179	1,178	436	28,321	..	201	10	..
Erie.....	7,571	8,816	5,356	3,461	2,429	3,057	503	42,625	4	259	58	5
Essex.....	2,827	2,744	1,760	610	96	2	299	15,782	12	153	18	3
Franklin.....	2,901	3,007	1,986	666	29	....	329	9,554	27	118	15	14
Fulton.....	1,547	1,738	1,439	670	151	35	153	10,529	1	110	2	..
Genesee.....	1,313	1,955	1,625	1,074	248	54	293	12,497	1	112	6	25
Greene.....	2,063	2,475	1,902	1,267	395	28	359	18,292	..	152	8	4
Hamilton.....	341	234	166	17	....	....	61	1,121	3	29	..	..
Herkimer.....	2,166	3,005	2,582	1,597	642	3	478	19,887	..	167	12	15
Jefferson.....	5,049	5,532	4,287	2,410	352	....	509	38,341	18	303	10	46
Kings.....	11,399	8,450	8,119	7,072	6,250	15,485	73	45,521	..	27	24	..
Lewis.....	2,612	2,523	1,947	898	75	....	378	15,542	15	161	4	9
Livingston.....	2,630	3,099	2,317	1,402	289	61	406	21,979	3	172	14	5
Madison.....	2,876	3,693	2,627	1,643	576	....	501	23,490	..	223	5	7
Monroe.....	5,359	5,834	4,104	3,224	2,120	492	373	33,175	1	140	64	42
Montgomery.....	1,791	2,176	1,689	1,255	556	107	214	10,982	..	107	10	3

TABLE 4.—Continued.

COUNTIES.	NUMBER OF CHILDREN TAUGHT.						No. of Inspectors.	No. of volumes in district library.	SCHOOL HOUSES.				
	Less than 2 months.	2 months and less than 4.	4 months and less than 6.	6 months and less than 8.	8 months and less than 10.	10 months and over.			TOTAL.	Log.	Framed.	Brick.	Stone.
New York .....	35,317	31,826	24,653	21,308	19,568	40,526	173,198	9,730	..	5	98	..	103
Niagara .....	3,081	4,336	2,973	2,042	598	4	13,034	22,590	5	102	26	40	173
Oneida .....	5,346	7,109	5,242	3,348	1,492	1,335	23,872	46,334	..	367	23	15	406
Onondaga .....	4,267	6,055	4,462	4,194	2,699	170	21,847	37,630	..	217	45	33	235
Ontario .....	2,690	3,619	2,485	1,394	485	10	10,683	19,499	..	145	34	26	206
Orange .....	3,485	3,374	2,605	2,030	1,164	455	13,113	32,309	1	157	18	16	191
Orleans .....	1,513	2,337	1,764	1,151	270	....	7,035	11,505	..	94	7	31	132
Oswego .....	4,899	5,837	4,968	3,502	1,241	....	20,447	27,733	2	280	18	7	307
Otsego .....	2,904	3,746	3,106	1,894	339	4	11,993	29,188	1	298	1	19	319
Putnam .....	775	690	643	441	190	95	2,834	6,961	..	53	6	..	59
Queens .....	1,692	1,911	1,664	1,392	1,186	1,104	8,949	22,413	..	77	1	..	78
Rensselaer .....	4,852	4,811	3,531	2,497	1,578	976	18,252	25,481	1	164	35	1	201
Richmond .....	1,207	969	797	594	381	250	4,198	7,262	..	17	6	1	24
Rockland .....	936	786	687	616	413	264	3,702	10,558	..	37	2	1	40
St. Lawrence .....	7,481	8,780	5,917	2,483	135	....	24,846	39,427	42	368	38	27	475
Saratoga .....	3,356	3,893	2,640	1,869	627	85	12,470	24,369	3	187	35	4	229
Schenectady .....	888	996	784	693	722	11	4,094	7,701	..	49	11	3	63
Schoharie .....	2,526	2,881	2,613	1,714	561	73	10,368	20,561	3	199	1	3	206
Schuyler .....	307	2,110	1,879	1,276	287	24	5,883	9,036	1	111	1	..	113
Seneca .....	1,878	2,228	1,853	1,137	248	45	7,389	14,012	..	71	51	3	105
Steuben .....	6,052	6,327	4,171	2,053	396	157	19,156	30,201	14	345	2	1	362
Suffolk .....	2,042	2,562	1,888	1,124	583	268	8,467	107,044	..	143	3	1	147
Sullivan .....	2,569	2,503	1,808	936	288	45	8,149	10,897	1	160	1	2	164
Tioga .....	1,818	2,277	1,805	929	221	....	7,050	12,887	1	161	1	..	163
Tompkins .....	1,684	2,136	1,636	1,258	439	253	7,406	16,428	..	155	2	3	180
Ulster .....	5,087	4,622	3,258	2,216	1,169	319	10,671	28,899	2	194	8	12	216
Warren .....	1,793	1,889	1,663	622	21	....	5,988	721	4	127	2	3	136
Washington .....	3,565	4,101	2,452	1,308	179	71	11,676	24,524	..	177	57	4	238

Wayne .....	2,846	3,696	2,891	1,958	525	124	12,340	369	23,412	..	139	20	59	218
Westchester .....	4,897	4,101	3,171	2,579	1,848	1,978	18,574	268	30,588	..	145	19	4	168
Wyoming .....	2,045	2,926	2,250	987	230	....	8,438	311	16,898	1	178	4	2	185
Yates .....	1,866	1,829	1,059	736	240	....	5,230	219	9,410	..	95	10	4	109
Total in State .....	217,941	241,851	180,030	118,937	61,791	72,000	892,550	18,883	1,326,682	228	10,004	964	554	11,750
CITIES.														
Albany .....	2,064	2,173	1,347	1,378	1,415	1,237	9,614	....	5,750	..	1	16	..	17
Auburn .....	470	532	327	350	386	355	2,420	....	3,469	..	..	5	..	5
Hudson .....	179	196	181	158	220	310	1,244	....	1,250	..	1	3	..	4
Poughkeepsie .....	453	339	390	313	276	773	2,544	....	6,074	..	1	4	..	5
Buffalo .....	3,095	3,210	2,073	2,241	2,208	3,009	15,836	....	11,292	..	8	25	1	34
Brooklyn .....	10,863	8,019	7,860	6,823	6,092	15,227	54,884	....	39,293	..	12	21	..	36
Rochester .....	1,843	1,573	1,390	1,468	1,806	472	8,552	....	7,709	..	..	17	..	17
New York .....	35,317	31,826	24,653	21,308	19,568	40,526	173,198	....	9,730	..	5	98	..	103
Utica .....	283	641	363	427	570	1,268	3,552	....	3,697	..	2	11	..	13
Syracuse .....	874	1,282	641	986	1,879	160	5,822	....	4,880	..	..	13	..	13
Oswego .....	670	669	671	1,099	927	....	4,036	....	3,300	..	7	4	1	12
Troy .....	1,828	1,553	1,460	1,298	1,149	757	8,045	....	1,745	..	2	11	..	13
Schenectady .....	288	363	291	404	386	....	1,932	....	2,915	..	4	3	1	8
Total in cities .....	58,227	52,376	41,647	38,253	37,082	64,094	291,679	....	101,104	..	43	234	3	280
Total in rural districts	159,714	189,475	138,383	80,684	24,709	7,906	600,871	18,883	1,225,578	228	9,961	730	551	11,470

TABLE 5.

ABSTRACT of the Financial Reports of the School Commissioners of the State of New York, for the year ending September 30, 1862.

COUNTIES.	RECEIPTS.					
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
	Amount on hand, Oct. 1, 1861.	Amount apportioned to districts.	From proceeds of gospel and school lands.	Raised by tax.	Raised by rate bills.	From all other sources.
	7.					Total.
Albany .....	\$21,993 29	\$35,253 99	.....	\$46,116 49	\$5,611 96	\$579 15
Allegany .....	560 84	18,158 82	\$46 60	5,634 94	3,813 06	153 79
Broome .....	144 05	14,849 23	220 94	7,974 49	4,213 35	317 41
Cattaraugus .....	546 18	17,749 25	.....	2,990 59	3,733 76	223 19
Cayuga .....	5,134 12	22,695 60	875 62	16,235 04	7,472 74	1,509 15
Chautauqua .....	742 27	22,888 89	.....	10,315 29	7,001 21	631 80
Chemung .....	9,501 86	10,466 13	.....	12,019 93	3,267 22	12,352 23
Chenango .....	468 63	18,135 33	1,417 27	3,876 75	4,462 91	647 45
Clinton .....	607 26	16,558 13	404 90	4,529 38	2,194 98	85 28
Columbia .....	2,397 32	16,616 56	.....	10,007 51	10,238 43	189 45
Cortland .....	460 86	11,321 26	1,104 63	1,936 05	2,088 22	71 99
Delaware .....	136 52	19,847 00	10 02	3,018 38	6,160 79	28,749 45
Dutchess .....	2,557 69	21,944 87	1 00	17,987 34	12,576 61	783 34
Erie .....	553 23	48,183 48	.....	66,418 80	7,922 35	4,770 54
Essex .....	349 21	11,663 50	.....	2,532 46	3,202 43	169 35
Franklin .....	385 88	11,796 10	83 90	4,149 45	1,175 72	73 71
Fulton .....	145 13	9,402 89	43 50	3,114 87	3,137 35	56 23
Genesee .....	215 78	11,580 84	.....	5,528 13	4,918 35	774 37
Greene .....	141 91	12,339 72	.....	5,087 00	4,077 36	66 49
Hamilton .....	34 38	1,563 58	8 63	183 62	124 53	4 93
Herkimer .....	489 85	15,757 47	6 47	7,161 57	5,373 39	72 58
Jefferson .....	343 21	27,798 58	.....	12,206 65	9,830 68	774 40
Kings .....	61,944 22	80,555 12	58 50	173,390 39	1,869 38	6,797 47
Lewis .....	264 12	11,765 28	178 72	3,304 67	3,180 31	06 75
						\$109,554 88
						28,368 05
						27,719 47
						25,242 97
						53,922 27
						41,579 46
						47,607 37
						29,008 34
						24,379 93
						39,440 27
						16,983 01
						28,749 45
						55,450 85
						127,848 40
						17,916 95
						17,664 76
						15,899 39
						23,017 47
						22,312 48
						1,919 67
						28,461 33
						50,953 52
						324,615 08
						18,759 85



# SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

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Livingston .....	253 67	15,037 49	55 82	5,647 61	8,069 85	227 64	29,292 08
Madison .....	346 31	17,021 32	927 52	7,487 83	7,016 10	609 30	33,408 38
Monroe .....	26,131 81	33,781 71	19 67	47,201 62	11,172 69	643 41	118,950 91
Montgomery .....	753 81	10,766 95	19 00	6,324 68	7,561 87	278 39	25,704 70
New York .....	287,886 11	212,768 99	.....	1,143,940 85	.....	4,121 48	1,648,317 43
Niagara .....	4,178 45	17,337 15	339 92	16,539 30	10,242 28	1,195 60	49,832 70
Oneida .....	11,430 61	38,313 21	554 92	29,736 42	11,455 54	900 61	92,481 31
Onondaga .....	3,954 03	32,509 00	3,610 18	31,825 14	11,858 00	1,646 13	85,102 48
Ontario .....	2,478 65	10,760 99	1 50	9,979 11	754 42	754 42	38,598 44
Orange .....	2,588 73	20,887 32	247 88	16,252 04	14,027 08	402 28	64,405 33
Orleans .....	183 25	10,521 28	40 35	5,804 83	5,592 73	30 20	22,172 61
Oswego .....	4,362 00	27,793 83	410 06	36,161 80	7,154 43	741 27	76,623 39
Oscego .....	551 30	20,385 03	48 44	5,556 24	6,288 16	139 38	32,968 57
Putnam .....	127 15	4,925 06	.....	1,379 87	3,501 89	282 56	10,216 53
Queens .....	5,067 63	17,134 18	4 75	24,744 40	8,759 47	1,584 64	57,285 07
Rensselaer .....	1,445 76	28,602 46	193 57	34,650 79	7,554 61	941 23	73,388 42
Richmond .....	1,496 60	7,226 19	.....	10,913 78	2,083 96	67 82	22,388 35
Rockland .....	1,040 73	6,584 10	.....	5,482 98	3,983 52	217 69	17,309 02
St. Lawrence .....	3,462 17	33,243 60	2,182 67	13,781 94	6,354 81	1,525 37	60,550 56
Saratoga .....	935 85	19,319 72	29 06	10,122 26	7,029 26	146 21	37,586 36
Schenectady .....	84 15	6,837 03	.....	8,272 80	2,516 91	1,754 98	19,465 87
Schoharie .....	164 48	13,885 72	50 00	3,122 46	5,939 38	2 91	23,164 95
Schoyler .....	309 38	7,644 66	738 30	2,884 43	3,598 80	33 08	15,228 65
Seneca .....	550 05	9,772 40	2,025 82	6,247 89	5,368 98	410 45	24,375 59
Steuben .....	400 14	26,413 21	136 75	11,538 53	7,517 95	528 05	46,534 63
Suffolk .....	1,928 79	14,415 70	.....	5,140 90	14,266 80	566 28	36,318 47
Sullivan .....	135 14	12,529 73	.....	2,763 13	5,136 52	26 85	20,591 37
Tioga .....	131 06	11,448 09	.....	3,207 88	3,630 59	96 41	18,524 03
Tompkins .....	1,452 13	14,236 46	452 15	5,403 72	3,780 01	25,241 47	47,602 56
Ulster .....	2,743 67	23,369 28	.....	9,806 22	11,406 02	277 37	47,602 56
Warren .....	99 45	8,674 23	19 25	1,365 73	1,445 28	247 95	11,851 89
Washington .....	748 53	17,697 98	.....	6,245 81	6,637 74	330 74	31,660 80
Wayne .....	526 68	18,219 95	301 90	10,865 17	9,679 77	1,388 77	40,981 54
Westchester .....	19,533 79	30,460 17	107 00	57,906 90	8,465 13	20,014 25	136,487 24
Wilmington .....	456 16	12,798 27	.....	4,057 90	4,655 33	325 77	22,283 43
Yates .....	163 01	8,115 08	.....	4,867 99	5,751 13	446 07	19,373 28
Total in State .....	\$501,660 03	\$1,394,417 90	\$19,998 05	\$2,068,057 74	\$407,009 57	\$77,598 12	\$4,468,741 42

TABLE 5.—Continued.

CITIES.	RECEIPTS.						
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
	Amount on hand, Oct. 1, 1861.	Amount apportioned to districts.	From proceeds of gospel and school lands.	Raised by tax.	Raised by rate bills.	From all other sources.	Total.
Albany .....	\$19,119 62	\$18,191 95	.....	\$34,000 00	.....	\$127 50	\$71,439 07
Auburn.....	4,812 72	3,285 59	\$19 23	8,283 64	.....	.....	16,401 18
Hudson.....	1,828 98	2,149 17	.....	3,000 00	.....	92 96	7,071 11
Poughkeepsie.....	1,149 08	4,267 55	.....	5,500 00	.....	.....	10,916 63
Buffalo .....	.....	22,651 86	.....	58,879 96	.....	4,066 85	88,598 67
Brooklyn .....	61,363 60	77,037 07	.....	170,200 00	.....	6,307 29	314,927 96
Rochester.....	25,633 64	14,608 77	.....	38,739 50	.....	75 00	79,056 91
New York.....	287,886 11	212,768 99	.....	1,143,540 85	.....	4,121 48	1,648,317 43
Utica.....	10,756 00	7,478 46	.....	17,700 00	.....	282 12	36,216 58
Syracuse .....	3,156 59	9,038 87	51 50	20,949 85	.....	1,015 80	34,212 61
Oswego .....	4,126 91	5,312 40	.....	25,988 00	.....	556 24	35,983 55
Troy.....	.....	12,136 13	.....	26,885 16	.....	.....	39,021 29
Schenectady .....	.....	2,985 00	.....	6,789 44	.....	1,674 48	11,448 92
Total in cities.....	\$419,833 25	\$394,931 81	\$70 73	\$1,560,456 40	.....	\$18,319 72	\$2,393,611 91
Total in rural districts .....	\$81,823 78	\$999,486 09	\$19,927 32	\$507,601 35	\$407,009 57	\$59,278 40	\$2,075,129 51

TABLE 5.—Continued.

## PAYMENTS.

COUNTIES.	8. For teachers' wages.	9. For libraries.	10. For school apparatus.	11. For colored schools.	12. For school houses, sites, fences, out-houses, repairs, furniture, etc.	13. For all other incidental expenses.	14. Amount remaining on hand, Oct. 1, 1892.	15. Total.
Albany .....	\$63,272 90	\$554 66	\$460 18	\$912 37	\$13,522 43	\$8,888 13	\$21,944 21	\$109,554 88
Allegany .....	22,364 88	418 44	41 95	44 79	3,030 67	1,880 36	586 96	28,368 05
Broome .....	23,539 33	450 43	90 86	112 53	2,208 88	1,175 50	141 94	27,719 47
Cattaraugus .....	21,078 42	390 25	35 04	.....	1,390 28	1,639 25	709 73	25,242 97
Cayuga .....	39,147 04	506 50	96 49	50 00	4,696 41	4,027 37	5,398 46	53,922 27
Chemung .....	32,512 17	417 61	179 79	.....	4,411 39	3,040 49	1,018 01	41,579 46
Chautauqua .....	20,201 42	193 58	156 07	357 94	15,953 49	6,258 50	4,486 37	47,607 37
Chemung .....	24,014 91	359 10	95 08	.....	1,822 52	2,051 72	664 98	29,008 34
Clinton .....	19,017 48	550 14	23 91	.....	2,158 41	1,951 96	678 03	24,379 93
Columbia .....	29,862 70	371 18	73 59	481 61	2,639 41	3,480 87	2,539 91	39,449 27
Cortland .....	14,213 85	135 57	12 28	.....	768 51	1,206 26	646 54	16,983 01
Delaware .....	25,802 58	417 48	28 80	10 27	624 88	1,358 36	507 08	28,749 45
Dutchess .....	41,985 57	805 34	46 05	320 04	5,828 81	5,099 61	1,365 43	53,450 85
Eric .....	102,613 13	2,441 51	325 95	750 00	11,225 13	10,097 39	395 29	127,848 40
Essex .....	14,606 36	202 95	11 22	.....	1,086 81	1,529 65	479 96	17,916 95
Franklin .....	13,636 39	205 65	8 15	.....	1,952 86	1,424 69	437 02	17,664 76
Fulton .....	13,621 43	263 76	82 86	.....	1,151 94	1,230 02	149 98	15,899 99
Genesee .....	18,042 07	769 57	42 96	.....	1,779 19	1,950 04	433 68	23,017 47
Greene .....	18,420 79	260 05	16 36	208 00	1,495 23	1,806 82	105 23	22,312 48
Hamilton .....	1,692 02	16 19	.....	.....	68 45	58 77	84 24	1,919 67
Herkimer .....	22,641 68	391 65	128 63	.....	1,470 93	2,986 74	841 70	28,461 33
Jefferson .....	39,306 74	526 31	115 98	.....	5,545 63	4,819 25	639 61	50,953 52
Kings .....	147,246 47	1,809 17	2,117 10	4,382 28	57,838 61	25,162 16	86,059 29	324,615 08
Lewis .....	14,984 73	227 02	9 03	.....	2,139 23	1,232 78	167 06	18,759 85
Livingston .....	23,282 48	397 87	32 48	.....	1,934 98	3,154 16	490 11	29,292 08
Madison .....	26,177 01	431 19	97 05	.....	3,358 85	2,878 92	405 36	33,405 38

TABLE 5.—Continued.

COUNTIES.	PAYMENTS.							15. Total.
	8. For teachers' wages.	9. For libraries.	10. For school apparatus.	11. For colored schools.	12. For school houses, sites, fences, out-houses, repairs, furniture, &c.	13. For all other incidental expenses.	14. Amount remaining on hand, Oct. 1, 1892.	
Monroe.....	\$66,538 59	\$1,291 82	\$150 00	\$1 74	\$12,273 22	\$10,265 09	\$28,430 45	\$118,950 91
Montgomery.....	20,607 56	324 26	23 14	.....	1,598 52	2,343 30	797 92	25,704 70
New York.....	822,977 70	.....	82,958 97	16,195 72	285,005 92	177,012 05	264,167 07	1,648,317 43
Niagara.....	31,903 02	585 41	71 72	255 41	4,719 49	6,860 05	5,437 60	49,832 70
Oneida.....	60,631 99	1,155 05	105 22	.....	6,784 23	9,150 81	14,654 01	92,481 31
Onondaga.....	62,523 79	1,090 01	314 62	63 98	9,127 27	10,601 10	1,381 71	85,102 48
Ontario.....	28,337 33	505 45	48 16	294 00	2,936 53	4,015 09	2,461 88	38,598 44
Orange.....	40,198 02	877 38	77 81	342 81	5,840 14	4,198 28	2,870 89	54,405 33
Orleans.....	16,547 54	281 58	36 48	.....	2,737 45	2,309 38	210 21	22,172 64
Oswego.....	47,834 39	895 68	68 33	.....	18,688 98	8,498 20	637 81	76,623 39
Otsego.....	26,965 42	412 15	45 07	.....	2,202 11	2,853 95	489 87	32,903 57
Putnam.....	9,111 06	127 43	6 96	.....	273 23	607 54	90 31	10,216 53
Queens.....	36,961 59	496 42	1,559 43	987 97	3,764 78	4,231 03	9,263 85	57,285 07
Rensselaer.....	52,400 27	962 68	252 59	675 18	6,587 79	6,494 63	6,015 28	73,388 42
Richmond.....	16,047 91	361 44	512 15	300 00	1,063 29	1,552 51	2,551 05	22,388 35
Rockland.....	12,604 01	327 31	40 28	130 00	1,064 88	1,395 80	1,720 74	17,309 02
St. Lawrence.....	43,365 55	665 51	47 98	.....	7,037 40	4,488 01	4,926 11	60,550 56
Saratoga.....	29,159 14	609 52	39 42	72 00	2,901 67	3,764 28	1,040 33	37,586 36
Schenectady.....	15,094 66	123 27	2 83	232 45	1,185 89	1,922 58	904 19	19,465 87
Schoharie.....	19,415 99	143 76	15 56	112 91	982 80	1,945 33	248 60	23,164 95
Schuyler.....	12,301 93	161 76	31 88	.....	1,172 93	1,301 12	259 03	15,228 65
Seneca.....	19,628 32	240 90	49 85	.....	1,611 56	2,417 98	426 98	24,375 59
Steuben.....	36,118 25	633 11	130 20	221 77	4,597 13	3,594 39	1,239 78	46,534 63
Suffolk.....	29,157 20	525 15	23 11	280 00	1,899 51	2,235 38	2,218 12	36,318 47
Sullivan.....	17,575 60	286 32	4 00	.....	1,302 97	1,093 38	329 10	20,591 37
Tioga.....	15,363 29	318 79	37 99	14 81	1,165 22	1,370 16	253 77	18,524 03



Tompkins.....	19,910 55	206 43	278 91	....	1,214 46	2,403 85	1,227 27	25,241 47
Ulster .....	37,560 09	808 91	193 25	12 41	2,663 70	2,797 94	3,566 26	47,602 56
Warren .....	9,982 87	166 22	70 71	.....	641 15	864 02	126 92	11,851 89
Washington.....	25,269 38	421 50	90 04	.....	1,037 87	3,812 57	1,029 44	31,660 80
Wayne .....	33,007 67	462 70	155 37	.....	2,168 01	4,545 87	41 92	40,981 54
Westchester.....	68,259 91	1,154 71	2,391 43	363 00	38,060 89	10,133 40	16,133 90	136,487 24
Wyoming .....	18,168 64	208 53	13 81	.....	1,640 83	1,835 33	416 29	22,283 43
Yates.....	14,440 89	130 64	37 62	.....	2,593 47	2,001 11	169 55	19,373 28
Total in State.....	\$2,780,371 05	\$32,912 92	\$94,456 18	\$29,013 12	\$600,169 00	\$418 742 06	\$513,077 09	\$4,468,741 42
CITIES.								
Albany .....	\$38,055 50	\$29 26	\$390 06	\$912 37	\$7,964 73	\$5,406 85	\$18,680 30	\$71,439 07
Auburn .....	8,974 17	199 27	.....	.....	1,243 74	1,008 35	4,975 65	16,401 18
Hudson .....	3,693 75	52 30	.....	260 00	623 98	555 24	1,885 84	7,071 11
Poughkeepsie.....	7,748 78	330 00	.....	250 04	401 60	2,186 21	.....	10,916 63
Puffalo .....	71,956 07	1,877 10	250 00	750 00	6,815 50	6,950 00	.....	88,598 67
Brooklyn.....	139,711 51	1,642 46	2,007 84	4,382 28	57,232 44	24,520 66	85,430 77	314,927 96
Rochester.....	35,617 00	701 17	.....	.....	8,096 00	6,591 35	28,051 39	79,056 91
New York.....	822,977 70	.....	82,958 97	16,195 72	285,005 92	177,012 05	264,167 07	1,648,317 43
Utica.....	17,039 98	271 19	40 00	.....	1,257 49	3,950 51	13,657 43	36,216 58
Syracuse.....	21,755 38	428 79	135 00	.....	5,640 01	5,594 53	658 90	34,212 61
Oswego .....	17,618 78	249 54	40 93	.....	12,695 65	5,378 65	.....	35,983 55
Troy .....	26,718 38	548 02	145 98	675 18	1,747 61	3,712 65	5,473 47	39,021 29
Schenectady .....	8,630 28	24 72	.....	232 45	591 89	1,144 84	824 74	11,448 92
Total in cities.....	\$1,220,497 26	\$6,353 82	\$85,968 78	\$23,658 04	\$389,316 56	\$244,011 89	\$423,805 56	\$2,393,611 91
Total in rural districts.....	\$1,559,873 79	\$26,559 10	\$8,487 40	\$5,355 08	\$210,852 44	\$174,730 17	\$89 271 53	\$2,075,129 51



TABLE No. 7.  
 STATEMENT of the investment of the capital of the School Fund at the close of each fiscal year since its establishment, to September 30, 1862.

YEARS.	BONDS.		LOANS OF			
	For lands sold.	For loans.	1786.	1792.	1803.	1840.
1805	-----	\$24,900 00	-----	-----	-----	-----
1806	\$87,674 83	42,800 00	-----	-----	-----	-----
1807	163,407 63	62,778 00	-----	-----	-----	-----
1808	212,246 31	83,403 00	-----	-----	-----	-----
1809	219,995 21	101,501 00	-----	-----	-----	-----
1810	232,702 97	69,653 75	-----	-----	-----	-----
1811	240,370 67	101,924 52	-----	-----	-----	-----
1812	263,743 26	143,965 38	-----	-----	-----	-----
1813	260,342 26	222,540 51	-----	-----	-----	-----
1814	268,124 86	245,034 17	-----	-----	-----	-----
1815	291,424 91	328,107 30	-----	-----	-----	-----
1816	320,165 33	392,076 93	-----	-----	-----	-----
1817	309,383 60	397,980 71	-----	-----	-----	-----
1818	316,434 39	390,000 17	-----	-----	-----	-----
1819	-----	-----	-----	\$500,000 00	\$449,076 00	-----
1820	-----	-----	-----	500,000 00	449,076 00	-----
1821	-----	4,554 57	-----	500,000 00	449,076 00	-----
1822	-----	-----	-----	496,177 50	449,076 00	-----
1823	23,883 39	-----	-----	483,232 87	447,495 25	-----

TABLE No. 7.—Continued.

YEARS.	BONDS.		LOANS OF			
	For lands sold.	For loans.	1786.	1792.	1808.	1840.
1824	\$85,749 12	-----	-----	\$450,660 92	\$443,990 50	-----
1825	100,664 46	-----	-----	410,547 06	439,372 50	-----
1826	112,751 28	-----	-----	382,549 40	434,182 50	-----
1827	186,624 59	-----	\$31,624 38	353,486 96	430,121 50	-----
1828	201,611 65	\$1,500 00	30,095 21	332,564 35	426,303 54	-----
1829	212,421 98	1,500 00	20,665 00	317,860 17	411,352 82	-----
1830	242,613 52	18,800 00	10,157 22	300,073 54	393,461 53	-----
1831	335,233 22	20,850 00	9,611 47	275,591 91	363,985 16	-----
1832	570,009 23	17,663 06	9,158 59	246,537 63	332,092 75	-----
1833	651,510 80	24,650 00	3,394 65	215,037 93	299,453 46	-----
1834	801,646 20	40,655 00	2,826 87	201,000 66	285,193 04	-----
1835	1,098,577 86	176,644 48	2,815 12	179,571 17	260,120 93	-----
1836	1,154,869 48	190,330 89	2,815 12	160,038 95	242,078 44	-----
1837	1,118,098 35	264,530 21	2,815 12	156,106 57	235,917 06	-----
1838	1,094,221 62	287,596 29	2,815 12	150,981 58	232,106 06	-----
1839	1,047,055 80	326,613 63	2,815 12	138,401 74	223,065 22	-----
1840	1,022,200 85	409,087 14	2,815 12	134,508 61	222,098 22	\$1,500 00
1841	1,087,554 15	424,118 03	2,815 12	130,792 14	220,346 22	33,200 00
1842	1,014,305 07	409,316 11	-----	115,995 72	221,176 95	33,200 00
1843	1,001,542 92	367,325 28	-----	113,262 73	219,174 95	33,200 00
1844	975,711 18	338,561 87	-----	110,671 23	214,886 26	8,200 00



1845	913,361	57	311,883	88	---	---	107,472	14	212,214,	26	8,200	00
1846	887,024	23	293,941	43	---	---	105,232	60	208,469	84	8,200	00
1847	826,149	19	257,865	33	---	---	103,054	15	202,613	03	8,200	00
1848	744,854	97	236,901	74	---	---	97,363	14	198,771	03	8,200	00
1849	703,438	29	246,131	75	---	---	89,893	50	191,588	32	12,200	00
1850	710,975	40	198,269	02	---	---	17,982	86	21,757	81	41,326	00
1851	652,435	30	209,034	72	---	---	379	50	3,543	46	49,326	00
1852	584,010	87	217,845	36	---	---	---	---	946	45	49,326	00
1853	567,829	02	236,754	17	---	---	---	---	679	45	49,326	00
1854	540,932	91	248,963	97	---	---	---	---	299	31	49,326	00
1855	551,458	12	248,967	29	---	---	---	---	299	31	49,326	00
1856	535,926	19	234,223	05	---	---	---	---	299	31	49,326	00
1857	529,697	66	310,227	29	---	---	---	---	---	---	49,326	00
1858	515,198	78	349,193	11	---	---	---	---	---	---	49,326	00
1859	488,146	07	381,218	09	---	---	---	---	---	---	49,326	00
1860	459,210	53	370,253	41	---	---	---	---	---	---	49,326	00
1861	422,575	87	408,469	71	---	---	---	---	---	---	49,326	00
1862	412,163	73	375,747	61	---	---	---	---	---	---	49,326	00

• 9 months.

TABLE No. 7.—Continued.

YEARS.	Bank stock.	State stocks.	Comptroller's bonds.	Money in the treasury.	Bonds for escheated lands.	Quit rents, arrears of interest, and miscellaneous.	Total amount of capital.
1805	-----	-----	-----	\$1,874 10	-----	-----	\$26,774 10
1806	\$50,000 00	-----	-----	2,688 13	-----	-----	183,162 96
1807	64,000 00	-----	-----	16,978 93	-----	-----	307,164 56
1808	70,850 00	-----	-----	3,606 67	-----	\$20,531 17	390,637 15
1809	79,100 00	-----	-----	3,350 30	-----	24,231 40	428,177 91
1810	118,500 00	-----	-----	326 33	-----	28,455 87	483,326 29
1811	165,000 00	-----	-----	2,338 37	-----	48,831 13	558,464 69
1812	180,000 00	-----	-----	5,345 54	-----	43,703 89	636,758 07
1813	255,000 00	-----	-----	35,955 43	-----	36,830 19	822,064 94
1814	270,000 00	-----	-----	42,548 02	-----	35,750 84	861,457 89
1815	270,000 00	-----	-----	-----	-----	44,482 92	934,015 13
1816	270,000 00	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	982,242 26
1817	264,000 00	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	971,364 31
1818	261,000 00	-----	-----	17,454 53	-----	60,000 00	1,044,889 09
1819	180,000 00	-----	-----	-----	-----	100,000 00	1,229,076 00
1820	180,000 00	-----	-----	-----	-----	86,500 00	1,215,526 00
1821	180,000 00	-----	-----	-----	-----	52,011 41	1,185,641 98
1822	180,000 00	-----	-----	3,822 50	\$6,686 85	20,064 55	1,155,827 40
1823	180,000 00	\$13,000 00	-----	8,827 91	8,853 63	7,620 23	1,172,913 28
1824	180,000 00	13,000 00	-----	89,025 37	-----	27,620 23	1,290,046 14
1825	180,000 00	168,000 00	-----	9,520 56	11,781 88	-----	1,319,886 46
1826	180,000 00	220,000 00	-----	11,830 88	12,163 58	-----	1,353,477 64

1827	---	280,000 00	220,000 00	---	97,653 00	11,676 37	---	1,611,096 80
1828	---	280,000 00	320,000 00	---	70,446 24	23,607 81	---	1,684,628 80
1829	---	280,000 00	395,826 00	---	45,091 72	26,363 55	---	1,711,081 24
1830	---	280,000 00	407,000 00	---	83,463 85	---	---	1,735,569 66
1831	---	280,000 00	407,000 00	---	61,887 64	---	---	1,754,159 40
1832	---	230,000 00	327,000 00	---	2,714 02	---	---	1,735,175 28
1833	---	230,000 00	330,000 00	---	---	---	---	1,754,046 84
1834	---	230,000 00	230,000 00	---	---	---	---	1,791,321 77
1835	---	105,050 00	---	---	52,413 15	---	---	1,875,191 71
1836	---	103,250 00	---	---	64,111 29	---	---	1,917,494 17
1837	---	102,300 00	---	---	39,880 37	---	---	1,919,647 68
1838	---	102,300 00	1,720 79	---	55,266 05	---	*2,700 00	1,929,707 51
1839	---	102,300 00	21,755 91	---	67,414 57	---	*3,000 00	1,932,421 99
1840	---	102,300 00	21,755 91	---	117,542 10	---	---	2,033,807 95
1841	---	102,300 00	23,200 96	---	12,302 06	---	---	2,036,625 68
1842	---	102,300 00	23,200 96	---	48,797 91	---	---	1,968,290 72
1843	---	102,300 00	23,200 96	---	115,086 31	---	---	1,975,093 15
1844	---	102,300 00	23,200 96	---	219,384 85	---	---	1,992,916 35
1845	---	50,000 00	115,500 96	\$51,645 43	320,354 11	---	---	2,090,632 41
1846	---	50,000 00	115,500 96	51,645 49	413,928 46	---	---	2,133,928 46
1847	---	50,000 00	115,500 96	51,645 49	555,406 32	---	---	2,170,514 47
1848	---	50,000 00	280,500 96	451,645 49	143,236 81	---	---	2,211,475 14
1849	---	50,000 00	228,200 96	656,445 49	64,665 05	---	---	2,243,563 36
1850	---	50,000 00	213,200 96	884,981 65	152,179 53	---	---	2,290,673 23
1851	---	50,000 00	213,200 96	1,034,981 65	112,548 13	---	---	2,325,449 72
1852	---	50,000 00	193,200 96	1,052,981 65	206,578 80	---	---	2,354,530 09
1853	---	50,000 00	193,200 96	1,054,986 16	230,481 47	---	---	2,383,257 23

TABLE No. 7.—Continued.

YEARS.	Bank stock.	State stocks.	Comptroller's bonds.	Money in the treasury.	Bonds for escheated lands.	Quit rents, arrears of interest, and miscellaneous.	Total amount of capital.
1854	\$50,000 00	\$193,200 96	1,043,341 33	\$229,147 49	-----	-----	\$2,425,211 97
1855	50,000 00	231,460 96	1,043,341 33	282,667 85	-----	-----	2,451,520 86
1856	50,000 00	231,460 96	1,043,341 33	347,329 30	-----	-----	2,491,916 14
1857	50,000 00	231,460 96	1,043,341 33	312,339 00	-----	-----	2,526,392 24
1858	50,000 00	936,502 29	356,300 00	294,740 34	-----	-----	2,551,260 52
1859	50,000 00	936,502 29	356,300 00	324,763 71	-----	-----	2,586,251 16
1860	50,000 00	936,502 29	356,300 00	385,444 45	-----	-----	2,607,036 68
1861	50,000 00	1,135,057 24	356,300 00	286,173 20	-----	-----	2,625,476 94
1862	50,000 00	1,135,057 24	356,300 00	279,521 84	-----	-----	2,658,116 42

\* Treasury notes.



TABLE No. 8.  
COMPARATIVE STATISTICS of the Common Schools in the State for the Year 1857, and the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 1862.

## STATISTICAL.

	1857.			1861-2.		
	Cities.	Rural districts.	Totals.	Cities.	Rural districts.	Totals.
Number of School districts.....	290	11,327	11,617	366	11,397	11,763
Number of teachers employed at the same time, for six months or more.	2,374	11,912	14,286	3,232	12,453	15,685
Number of children between 4 and 21 years of age.....	360,390	879,786	1,240,176	443,826	878,997	1,322,823
Aggregate number of months' school by qualified teachers.....	3,215	86,171	89,386	3,986	86,302	90,288
Number of male teachers employed.....	319	11,858	12,177	334	7,251	7,585
Number of female teachers employed.....	2,316	17,254	19,570	2,867	16,048	18,915
Number of children attending school.....	235,336	606,801	842,137	291,679	600,871	892,550
Number of times schools have been visited by Commissioners.....	85,609	15,461	15,461	.....	18,883	18,883
Number of volumes in district libraries.....	.....	1,362,504	1,448,113	101,104	1,223,578	1,320,682
Number of school houses—Log.....	.....	333	333	.....	228	228
do do do Frame.....	40	9,707	9,747	43	9,961	10,004
do do do Brick.....	207	669	876	234	780	964
do do do Stone.....	15	595	610	3	551	554
Total number of school houses.....	262	11,304	11,566	280	11,470	11,750

TABLE 8.—Continued.  
FINANCIAL.

	1857.			1861-2.		
	Cities.	Rural districts.	Totals.	Cities.	Rural districts.	Totals.
RECEIPTS:						
Amount on hand at beginning of the year.....	\$104,783 16	\$35,359 24	\$140,142 40	\$419,833 25	\$81,826 78	\$501,660 03
Apportionment of public moneys.....	371,007 05	975,895 51	1,346,902 56	394,931 81	990,486 09	1,394,417 90
Proceeds of gospel and school lands .....	170 84	17,278 18	17,449 02	70 73	19,927 32	19,998 05
Raised by tax .....	1,309,765 45	526,777 26	1,836,542 71	1,560,456 40	507,601 35	2,068,057 75
Raised by rate-bills .....	.....	390,515 50	390,515 50	.....	407,009 57	407,009 57
From all other sources.....	18,598 09	32,838 51	51,396 60	18 319 72	59,278 40	77,598 12
Total.....	\$1,804,284 59	\$1,988,664 20	\$3,792,948 79	\$2,393,611 91	\$2,075,129 51	\$4,468,741 42
EXPENDITURES:						
For teachers' wages.....	\$926,768 42	\$1,445,245 44	\$2,372,113 86	\$1,220,497 26	\$1,559,873 79	\$3,780,371 05
For libraries.....	6,706 89	33,352 97	40,059 86	6,353 82	26,559 10	32,912 92
For school apparatus .....	91,562 36	4,975 58	96,537 94	85,968 78	8,487 40	94,456 18
For colored schools.....	8,367 75	2,362 18	10,729 93	23,658 04	5,355 08	29,013 12
For school houses, sites, fences, etc.....	470,402 60	295,123 99	765,526 59	339,316 56	210,852 44	600,169 00
For all other incidental expenses .....	210,063 24	158,973 81	369,027 05	244,011 89	174,730 17	418,742 06
Amount on hand at end of the year .....	90,423 33	48,530 23	138,953 56	423,805 56	89,271 53	513,077 09
Total.....	\$1,804,284 59	\$1,988,664 20	\$3,792,948 79	\$2,393,611 91	\$2,075,129 51	\$4,468,741 42

( A. )

LIST OF ACADEMIES,

*Designated to Instruct Common School Teachers, for the Academic  
Year, 1862-3.*

<i>Counties.</i>	<i>Names of Academies.</i>
Allegany.....	Alfred Academy. Genesee Valley Seminary
Broome.....	Binghamton Academy. Windsor Academy.
Cattaraugus.....	Olean Academy. Randolph Academy.
Cayuga .....	Cayuga Lake Academy. Port Byron Free School.
Chautauqua .....	Fredonia Academy. Westfield Academy. Jamestown Academy.
Chemung .....	Elmira Academy.
Chenango .....	Oxford Academy. Norwich Academy.
Clinton.....	Plattsburgh Academy. Champlain Academy.
Columbia .....	Kinderhook Academy. Claverack Academy & H. R. I.
Cortland.....	Cortland Academy. Cortlandville Academy.
Delaware .....	Delaware Academy. Delaware Literary Institute.
Dutchess.....	Poughkeepsie Female Academy.
Erie .....	Aurora Academy. Buffalo Central School. Springville Academy.
Essex .....	Keeseville Academy.

Franklin.....	Fort Covington Academy. Franklin Academy.
Fulton .....	Gloversville Union Seminary.
Genesee .....	Genesee and Wyoming Seminary.
Greene .....	Greeneville Academy.
Herkimer .....	Fairfield Academy. West Winfield Academy.
Jefferson.....	Jefferson County Institute. Union Academy of Bellville. Antwerp Liberal Literary Inst'te.
Lewis .....	Lowville Academy.
Livingston .....	Genesee Wesleyan Seminary. Dansville Seminary.
Madison .....	De Ruyter Institute. Oneida Seminary.
Monroe .....	Brockport Collegiate Institute. Penfield Seminary.
Montgomery .....	Canajoharie Academy.
Niagara .....	Lockport Union School. Wilson Collegiate Institute.
Oneida .....	Rome Academy. Whitestown Seminary.
Onondaga.....	Munro Collegiate Institute. Onondaga Academy.
Ontario.....	Canandaigua Academy. Naples Academy.
Orange .....	Chester Academy.
Orleans .....	Albion Academy.
Oswego.....	Mexico Academy. Falley Seminary.
Otsego .....	Hartwick Seminary. Gilbertsville Academy. Unadilla Academy.
Rensselaer .....	Troy Female Seminary.
St. Lawrence.....	St. Lawrence Academy. Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary. Lawrenceville Academy.
Saratoga .....	Schuylerville Academy. Jonesville Academy.
Schenectady.....	Schenectady Union School.



Schoharie .....	Schoharie Academy.
Schuyler .....	Watkins Academy.
Seneca .....	Ovid Academy.
Steuben .....	Corning Free Academy.
	Rogersville Union Seminary.
	Franklin Academy.
Suffolk .....	Sag Harbor Institute.
	Clinton Academy.
Sullivan .....	Liberty Normal Institute.
Tioga .....	Owego Academy.
	Waverly Institute.
Tompkins .....	Ithaca Academy.
	Groton Academy.
Ulster .....	Kingston Academy.
Warren .....	Warrensburgh Academy.
Washington .....	Washington Co. Sem. and C. I.
	Whitehall Academy.
	Union Village Academy.
Wayne .....	Macedon Academy.
	Sodus Academy.
Wyoming .....	Middleburgh Academy.
	Perry Academy.
Yates .....	Penn Yan Academy.

## PROVISIONAL APPOINTMENTS.

Cincinnatus Academy,	Monticello Academy,
Moravia Institute,	Walton Academy,
Walworth Academy,	Jordan Academy,
Webster Academy,	Trumansburgh Academy.
By order.	

S. B. WOOLWORTH,

*Secretary.**Dated July 5, 1862.*

## ( B. )

*List of School Commissioners in the State of New York.*

Counties.	Dists.	Names.	Post Offices.
Albany :	1.	L. Carter Tuttle .....	Cedar Hill.
	2.	George L. Bouton .....	Rensselaerville.
	3.	Thomas Helme .....	McKownsville.
		H. B. Haswell (Sec. B'd Ed)	Albany.
Allegany :	1.	Robert Snow .....	Belfast.
	2.	Henry L. Jones .....	Wellsville.
Broome :	1.	Albert A. Rose .....	Windsor.
	2.	William W. Elliott .....	Binghamton.
Cattaraugus :	1.	Lyman Packard .....	Yorkshire Centre.
	2.	George A. Gladden .....	Napoli.
Cayuga :	1.	Israel Wilkinson .....	Meridian.
	2.	Wm. Hart .....	Auburn.
	3.	Phineas B. Young .....	East Venice.
		C. P. Williams (City Supt)	Auburn.
Chautauqua :	1.	Richard D. Vrooman .....	Clymer.
	2.	Andrew P. White .....	Ellington.
Chemung :		Jesse McKinney .....	Elmira.
Chenango :	1.	Orville Benedict .....	South Plymouth.
	2.	Edgar Garret .....	Afton. [Co.
Clinton :	1.	Henry N. Hewitt .....	Keeseville, Essex
	2.	Joel Chandler .....	Mooers.
Columbia :	1.	Hartwill Reynolds .....	Ancram L'd Mines.
	2.	Peter I. Philip .....	Stuyvesant.
		L. G. Guernsey (City Supt)	Hudson.
Cortland :	1.	Daniel E. Whitmore .....	Marathon.
	2.	Lyman Pierce .....	Truxton.
Delaware :	1.	A. D. Knapp .....	Delhi.
	2.	Alexander B. Douglas .....	Andes.
Dutchess :	1.	Augustus A. Brush .....	East Fishkill.
	2.	Charles J. Howland .....	Hyde Park.
		E. J. Buckingham (Pres. B'd Education) .....	Poughkeepsie.

Counties.	Dists.	Names.	Post Offices.
Erie :	1.	David W. Hershey .....	Williamsville.
	2.	Thomas J. Powers .....	Hamburgh.
	3.	Henry S. Stebbins .....	Gowanda, Catt. Co
		J. B. Sackett (City Supt.)..	Buffalo.
Essex :	1.	Frank M. Hopkins .....	Keeseville.
	2.	C. Fenton .....	Crown Point.
Franklin :	1.	Sydney P. Bates .....	Malone.
	2.	William Gillis .....	Fort Covington.
Fulton :		Ira H. Van Ness .....	Osborn's Bridge.
Genesee :		O. S. Throop .....	Batavia.
Greene :	1.	C. C. W. Cleveland .....	Catskill.
	2.	Martin L. Newcomb .....	South Durham.
Hamilton :		Wm. W. Burnham .....	Wells.
Herkimer :	1.	Ethan A. Ives .....	Newport.
	2.	O. B. Beals .....	Cedarville.
Jefferson :	1.	Henry H. Smith .....	Rodman.
	2.	J. Winslow .....	Watertown.
	3.	William Hawes .....	Clayton.
Kings :		Homer L. Bartlett .....	Flatbush.
		J. W. Bulkley (City Supt.)..	Brooklyn.
Lewis :	1.	Henry C. Northam .....	Port Leyden.
	2.	Wayne Clark .....	Copenhagen.
Livingston :	1.	Franklin B. Francis .....	Lima.
	2.	Harvey Farley .....	Springwater.
Madison :	1.	Harrison Burgess .....	Erieville.
	2.	Hiram L. Rockwell .....	Munnsville.
Monroe :	1.	Wm. W. Marsh .....	Pittsford.
	2.	John R. Garretsee .....	Spencerport.
		D. Holbrook (City Supt.)..	Rochester.
Montgomery :		Morris Klock .....	St. Johnsville.
New York :		S. S. Randall (City Supt.)..	New York City.
Niagara :	1.	Hiram Pomroy .....	Lockport.
	2.	Ralph Stockwell .....	Lockport.
Oneida :	1.	Harvey E. Wilcox .....	Floyd.
	2.	Peter B. Crandall .....	Babcock Hill.
	3.	Joshua H. Tracy .....	Camden. [Co.
	4.	Merritt N. Capron .....	W. Leyden, Lewis
		D. S. Heffron (City Supt.)..	Utica.

Counties.	Dists.	Names.	Post Offices.
Onondaga :	1.	James M. Clark.....	Baldwinsville.
	2.	E. P. Howe .....	Marcellus.
	3.	Benjamin S. Gregory.....	Jamesville.
		G. L. Farnham (City Supt.)	Syracuse.
Ontario :	1.	J. A. Wader.....	Phelps.
	2.	David E. Wilson.....	Bristol.
Orange :	1.	Alexander Beattie.....	Coldenham.
	2.	Harvey H. Clark.....	Minisink.
Orleans :		Marcus H. Phillips.....	Hulberton.
Oswego :	1.	John A. Place .....	Fulton.
	2.	W. G. Chaffee .....	Palermo.
	3.	George F. Woodbury.....	Sand Bank.
		E. A. Sheldon (City Supt.)	Oswego.
Otsego :	1.	Charles F. Thompson.....	Schuyler's Lake.
	2.	Henry R. Washbon.....	Morris.
Putnam :		Peter B. Curry .....	Red Mills.
Queens :	1.	Benjamin W. Downing....	Flushing.
	2.	Daniel Clark .....	Hempstead.
Rensselaer :	1.	James C. Comstock.....	Lansingburgh.
	2.	Jabez F. Gilman.....	Greenbush.
		E. Danforth (City Supt.)..	Troy.
Richmond :		Isaac Lea.....	Stapleton.
Rockland :		S. D. Demarest .....	Blauveltville.
St. Lawrence :	1.	Martin L. Laughlin.....	Hammond.
	2.	Clark Baker .....	Hermon.
	3.	W. W. Bloss .....	Potsdam.
Saratoga :	1.	Seymour Chase .....	Ballston Spa.
	2.	A. M. Boyce.....	Saratoga Spa.
Schenectady :		Samuel A. Weast .....	Mariaville.
		Benj. Stanton (City Supt.)	Schenectady.
Schoharie :	1.	B. Becker.....	Middleburgh.
	2.	Augustus C. Smith.....	Cobleskill.
Schuyler :		Charles G. Winfield.....	Havana.
Seneca :		P. V. N. Bodine.....	Lodi.
Steuben :	1.	Stephen Vorhis.....	Hammondsport.
	2.	E. D. Peckham .....	Cameron Mills.
	3.	Rodney Dennis .....	Hornellsville.
Suffolk .....	1.	E. Jones Ludlow.....	Bridgehampton.
	2.	Wm. Nicoll.....	Huntington.
Sullivan :		Albert Stage .....	Lumberland.



Counties.	Dists.	Names.	Post Offices.
Tioga :		William Smyth .....	Owego.
Tompkins :		John D. Thatcher .....	Ithaca.
Ulster :	1.	P. F. Hasbrouck .....	Kingston.
	2.	Jonathan W. Hasbrouck ..	Stone Ridge.
	3.	Cyrus Shook .....	Napanock.
Warren :		Luther A. Arnold .....	Glens Falls.
Washington :	1.	Earl P. Wright .....	Salem.
	2.	John C. Earl .....	Whitehall.
Wayne :	1.	Thomas Robinson .....	Rose.
	2.	Myron W. Reed .....	Walworth.
Westchester :	1.	Theodore Kent .....	West Farms.
	2.	Isaac D. Vermilye .....	Armonk.
	3.	Henry White .....	Yorktown.
Wyoming :	1.	George H. Dunham .....	Johnsonsburgh.
	2.	Warren S. Brown .....	North Java.
Yates :		George P. Lord .....	Dundee.

( C. )

To the Hon. VICTOR M. RICE,

*Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

SIR—The Trustees of the Thomas Asylum for Orphan and Destitute Indian Children, respectfully beg leave to report, that at the close of the year ending September 30, 1861, fifty-two children were reported under care at this institution. One of these was immediately dismissed, leaving under care October 1, 1861 .....

There were received during the year..... 7

Total ..... 58

There were dismissed before the close of the year..... 6

At its close..... 2

Leaving in the institution, October 1, 1862..... 50

No death occurred among the children during the year.

The cash account for the year is as follows, viz:

Receipts from all sources..... \$3,024 17

Of which from the State for the support of children..... \$992 00

Share of general appropriation to incorporated asylums..... 183 66

From school moneys for board of teacher. 50 00

Total from the State..... \$1,225 66

From the Indian Department at Washington 1,000 00

From the Indian committee of Society of Friends..... 200 00

From individuals of the committee..... 30 75

From the A. B. C. F. M. towards the support of matron..... 100 00

From young ladies' social circle, Versailles, Cattaraugus county..... 97 25

Various collections and donations..... 370 51

\$3,024 17

The disbursements during the year were \$3,240.89, being an excess of payments above receipts, of \$216.72.

The amount of debt reported September 30, 1861, was	\$1,837 44
The amount of present debt is .....	1,109 75
Diminution since last report .....	<u>\$727 69</u>

This reduction was effected, in part, by an extra appropriation from the Indian Department at Washington, and partly by omitting needed repairs and improvements about the premises, and reducing all expenses to a war footing by retrenchments in every practicable way, however injurious to the prosperity and success of the institution, aiming to reach the lowest point at which it could be kept in operation until the present pressure should pass by. At the present moment there is urgent need of repairs, improvements, and additional help, to an amount much greater than the diminution of debt accomplished by this doubtful but imperative economy.

While, therefore, the Trustees would gratefully acknowledge the relief which has been afforded, they would respectfully but most earnestly solicit from the overflowing treasury of the State that additional assistance which will remove the burden of debt entirely, and place the institution in circumstances to accomplish its benevolent objects for the benefit of the degraded and suffering Indian orphans, and for the relief of the surrounding community from the burden which the ignorance, poverty and crime of this numerous class, if neglected, will inevitably impose upon it.

The Trustees would only add, that double the number now under care, might be gathered at once without including any who would not be proper objects of this charity, if they could be furnished with the means of providing for them.

All which is respectfully submitted.

In behalf of the Trustees,

WALLACE KING, *President.*

ASHER WRIGHT, *Clerk.*

E. M. PETTIT, *Treasurer.*

( D. )

VERSAILLES, N. Y., October 1, 1862.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*:

SIR — The undersigned, superintendent of Indian schools, respectfully submits the following report in relation to the condition and expenses of the schools on the Cattaraugus and Allegany reservations, for the year ending September 30, 1862.

The number of districts in which schools have been taught during said year is,

On the Cattaraugus reservation .....	8
On the Allegany reservation.....	5

The amount of teachers' wages for said year is,

On the Cattaraugus reservation.....	\$1,249 00
On the Allegany reservation.....	616 00
	<hr/>
	\$1,865 00
	<hr/> <hr/>

There was paid during said year,

For books and stationery .....	\$129 15
For repairs of school-houses .....	57 62
Services of superintendent .....	120 00
Traveling and incidental expenses.....	79 48

One school at Cattaraugus and one at Allegany have been suspended, because no houses could be rented for the purpose, and until school-houses can be built in these districts they can have no schools. During more than half of the summer term, four of the schools at Allegany were suspended, on account of the small-pox, which prevailed there many weeks.

In some of the districts, a large proportion of the people still adhere to their pagan customs and the rites incident to their mode of worship. In these districts, but a few years ago, every effort made for the establishment of schools met with decided opposition. Although active opposition has pretty generally subsided, yet many of the parents feel so little interest in



the education of their children, that the teachers still find it impossible to secure a prompt attendance of the scholars. Another difficulty with which the teachers have to contend, consists in the fact that all the text books in use are in a language that the pupils do not understand; consequently none but teachers of unusual patience and tact can succeed in making even moderate progress in these schools.

In places where schools have been longest in progress, there is better attendance and more decided improvement, not only in the advancement in education and knowledge of the English language by the pupils in the schools, but the people generally are becoming better informed as to current events and everything that appertains to their welfare, social comfort, and civilization; many of them take regularly weekly and daily papers, magazines, &c., and are well posted in relation to the affairs of the country. A large number of them have enlisted in the army, and fight as bravely as other men to put down the rebellion, inspired by motives—judging by the letters they write to their friends—truly patriotic, based upon an enlightened view of the cause of the rebellion and the importance of putting it down.

Since the date of my last report, the national council have passed an act authorizing the election of a trustee by the people of each school district. The principal duty of said trustees, is to furnish wood for the use of the schools. They are authorized to levy a tax on all the men residing in their respective districts, and in case the wood is not furnished by the time designated, to collect the amount of the tax by seizure and sale of property. Thus far the law has been well executed, and wood for the schools has been furnished better than ever before. Thus it will be seen that one of the benefits resulting from the system of schools established by the State for this people is, that they are learning how to make and execute good laws, and that they appreciate the good results that they are deriving from the effort that the State is making to educate their children.

There are three or four districts in which no school-houses have been erected, and they can have schools only when houses can be rented for that purpose; consequently the children in these localities have received but little benefit from the funds appropriated for their education. These districts are in the

newest settlements, and the people are not able to build school-houses without aid. I call your attention to this subject, hoping that the state of the funds at your disposal will admit of your granting the aid required.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. M. PETTIT.

## ( E. )

TABLE showing the time the Indian schools were in session during the school year 1862-3, and the number of pupils in attendance.

*Oneida Reservation:*

School in Oneida county, 22½ weeks. 31 pupils.

School in Madison county, 28½ weeks. 21 pupils.

*Onondaga Reservation:* 10½ months..... 58 pupils.*Shinecock Reservation:* 4 months..... 32 pupils.*St. Regis Reservation:*

School No. 1—45 weeks..... 96 pupils.

do 2—45 weeks..... 45 pupils.

*Tuscarora Reservation:*

School No. 1—10 months..... 60 pupils.

do 2—7 months ..... 35 pupils.

*Tonawanda Reservation:*

School No. 1—32 weeks..... 39 pupils.

do 2—31 weeks..... 53 pupils.

*Cattaraugus Reservation:*

School No. 1—36 weeks..... 28 pupils.

do 2—36 do ..... 51 pupils.

do 3—36 do ..... 47 pupils.

do 4—36 do ..... 53 pupils.

do 5—36 do ..... 44 pupils.

do 6—20 do ..... 22 pupils.

do 7—34 do ..... 29 pupils.

do 8—36 do ..... 26 pupils.

*Allegany Reservation:*

School No. 1—23 weeks..... 19 pupils.

do 2—31 do ..... 22 pupils.

do 3—36 do ..... 25 pupils.

do 4—30 do ..... 30 pupils.

do 5—22 do ..... 27 pupils.

Total number of pupils.....893

( F. )

*Statistics of Teachers' Institutes.\**

	Number of counties.	Number of Institutes.	Teachers in attendance.	Amount paid by the State.
1854.....	19	19	1,100	\$1,100 00
1855.....	36	36	2,000	2,000 00
1856.....	--	--	3,000	1,020 00
1857.....	41	--	----	4,321 14
1858.....	48	--	----	4,191 55
1859.....	50	51	6,766	4,931 38
1860.....	47	54	5,913	6,419 62
1861.....	48	52	7,556	8,092 77
1862.....	52	62	9,444	8,665 16

*Comparative statistics for the last four years.*

1859. 50 counties, 51 institutes, amount paid, \$4,931.38.

Teachers in attendance, 6,766.

Average per county,  $135\frac{1}{2}$ .

Average per institute,  $132\frac{1}{2}$ .

Expense per county, (average,) \$98.62 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

Expense per teacher,  $72\frac{1}{2}$ c.

1860. 47 counties, 54 institutes, amount paid, \$6,419.62.

Teachers in attendance, 5,913.

Average per county,  $125\frac{3}{4}$ .

Average per institute,  $109\frac{1}{2}$ .

Expense per county, (average,) \$136.58 $\frac{3}{4}$ .

Expense per teacher, \$1.08 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

1861. 48 counties, 52 institutes, amount paid, \$8,092.77.

Teachers in attendance, 7,556.

Average per county,  $157\frac{1}{4}$ .

Average per institute,  $145\frac{1}{3}$ .

Expense per county, (average,) \$168.60.

Expense per teacher, \$1.07.

1862. 52 counties, 62 institutes, amount paid, \$8,665.16.

Teachers in attendance, 9,444.

Average per county,  $181\frac{1}{2}$ .

Average per institute,  $152\frac{1}{3}$ .

Expense per county, (average,) \$166.63 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

Expense per teacher,  $91\frac{3}{4}$ c.

\* No full statistics of institutes are in possession of this Department prior to 1859. There is, however, sufficient evidence of a gradual and healthful growth annually since 1854.



( G. )

## REPORTS OF CITY SUPERINTENDENTS AND SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.

In a circular forwarded to the city superintendents and school commissioners, in September last, those officers were requested to make, in connection with their annual statistical reports, "written reports" in regard to the condition of public instruction within their several jurisdictions; and the following "Schedule of Desiderata" and directions in regard to it, accompanied that request:

"COMMON SCHOOLS. Attendance and non-attendance of persons of school age; effect of the rate-bills on attendance, and public sentiment in regard to them; provisions for instruction of pupils, including character and condition of school-houses, their sites and outbuildings, their furniture, and the mode in which they are warmed and ventilated; the kind and supply of school apparatus and text books, the branches of study most generally pursued; the ages at which pupils begin and end their attendance, and the whole time they are allowed to attend schools; general progress of these schools, and their most urgent wants.

"TEACHERS. Proportion of male and female, and of those who follow teaching as a permanent and as a temporary employment; months or years they generally devote to teaching as a business, and their wages in summer and in winter; their attendance on teachers' institutes and associations; character of the examinations to which you subject them; branches of study which you find them best prepared to teach, and those in which they are most deficient; proportion who have studied some work treating of the "Theory and Practice of Teaching;" grades of certificate granted annually; demand for teachers of high qualifications and the supply; number of Normal school graduates and undergraduates employed in the common schools, their success, influence and zeal for improvement, and the demand for their services.

"ACADEMIES. Number of students in attendance, and proportion of different ages; buildings, libraries, apparatus—chemical and philosophical; studies generally pursued in them; wages paid their teachers; their sources of support and rates of tuition; practical benefit to the common schools of the teachers' classes taught in those selected for the purpose by the Regents of the University.

"PRIVATE SCHOOLS. Number of; increase or decrease as compared with former years; number of pupils in attendance on them.

"PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS. Number of, attendance on, &c.

"SCHOOLS FOR COLORED CHILDREN. Number and location of; number of pupils instructed in; provision for their support.

"UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICTS. Number of, organized under the law of 1853; their location.

"DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES. Their condition; character of books composing them; estimation in which they are held by the people.

"PRIVATE LIBRARIES, PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS. Proportion of families supplied with either; effect upon the demand for school district libraries.

"TRUSTEES. Sentiment of the people as to which is preferable, one or three; proportion of districts having but one; proportion, whose trustees have complied with the requirements of "No. 116" of the Code of Public Instruction.

"TEACHERS' INSTITUTES. Number of days in session (the last which shall have been held at the time of making your report); names and residences of persons employed as instructors; subjects on which instruction was given; names of lecturers, and their subjects; number of teachers in attendance; public interest manifested in the exercises, &c.

"SCHOOL COMMISSIONER. Detail of labors performed in discharge of duties.

"The preceding schedule of desiderata is designed, *not* to interfere with your independence of action in regard to the plan and execution of your report, but solely to direct your attention to subjects and inquiries which you may find important in its preparation. In view of the probability of its being presented, with the reports of other commissioners, to the Legislature, and published, you will perceive the necessity of making it concise and brief, and of arranging its parts according to the intimacy of their relationship."

In response to that circular, the undersigned received the following reports, which give, in brief, a detailed account of the working of the school system in the various counties, assembly districts and cities. Some of these have been condensed, to bring the mass within reasonable length for publication. It is but just to the school officers to say, that the late day at which the above mentioned circular was issued, together with the onerous duties of holding the fall institutes and examinations, and compiling the annual reports required by law, have in some measure prevented as complete returns as would be desirable; whilst from some of the districts no reports have been received. These reports will be of much value in the several localities they represent, and will be read with interest by those who seek information in detail in regard to the schools.

V. M. R.

## CITY OF NEW YORK.

CITY SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE, }  
NEW YORK, *January 1, 1863.* }

Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Supt. Pub. Instruction :*

In accordance with your instructions, I have the honor to submit the following report of the condition of the public schools of the city and county of New York.

There are in this city fifty-three ward schools, embracing generally three separate departments, viz: a grammar school for boys, a grammar school for girls, and a primary department for children of both sexes. In some few instances the boys' and girls' grammar schools are in separate buildings. In addition to these there are about forty primary schools, of the same grade as the primary departments, but occupying distinct buildings. There are also six grammar and two primary schools for colored children, twelve corporate schools participating in the public money, forty-four evening schools, and one colored normal school. The Free Academy, for males only, is the only institution of a higher grade at present pertaining to the system.

Considering each separate department as a school, therefore, the whole number of schools in the city, exclusive of the evening schools, the corporate schools, and the Free Academy, may be stated at 201.

In these several schools (including corporate schools), the aggregate number of pupils taught during the year ending on the 30th of September last, was 173,198.

Of this number there were in the

Grammar schools for boys.....	28,758
Grammar schools for girls.....	22,742
Primary departments.....	74,054
Primary schools.....	35,202
Colored schools.....	2,391
Corporate schools.....	10,051
	<hr/>
	173,198
	<hr/>

Of whom the No. taught for 10 months and over was.....	40,526
do do 8 months and less than 10.....	19,568
do do 6 do 8.....	21,308
do do 4 do 6.....	24,653
do do 2 do 4.....	31,826
do do less than 2 months.....	35,317
	<hr/> 173,198
No. of pupils in the evening schools.....	18,639
do do Free Academy.....	847
	<hr/>
Total No. under instruction.....	192,684
	<hr/> <hr/>

The average attendance in the several grammar schools, primary departments and schools, colored and corporate schools, for the past year, was 70,292, distributed as follows:

Boys' grammar schools.....	12,345
Girls' do .....	10,335
Primary departments.....	28,700
Primary schools.....	13,784
Colored schools.....	993
Corporate schools.....	4,135
	<hr/> 70,292
Average attendance in evening schools.....	8,433
	<hr/>
Total average.....	78,725
	<hr/> <hr/>

The number of duly qualified teachers employed in the several schools during the past year, was 1,896; of whom 191 held State certificates, 21 were graduates of the State normal school, and the remainder were licensed by the city superintendent. Of this number about 1,700 are female teachers.

The amount of money raised by tax in the city and county of New York, under the provisions of the State school law, during the past year, was.....	\$428,309 10
The whole amount apportioned to the city, including its share of the Common School Fund and of the school tax, was.....	245,080 34
	<hr/>
Balance raised over amount received.....	\$183,228 76
	<hr/> <hr/>

This large amount, of course, annually contributes to the share of public money apportioned to the other counties of the State, and is none of it applied to the support of the schools of the city.

Exclusive of this amount, there is annually raised by tax, for the support of schools in the city of New York, upwards of \$1,500,000, of which \$823,000 is applied to the payment of teachers' wages, \$83,000 for school



apparatus, \$16,000 for the expenses of the colored schools, \$78,000 for sites, \$63,000 for building and hiring school houses, \$96,000 for repairs, and \$48,000 for furniture. The remaining \$300,000 is applicable to the payment of salaries of the various officers appointed by the board of education for the administration of the system, including clerks, superintendents, inspectors of fuel, janitors of the several school buildings, &c., and for the various expenses incidental to the schools, not above enumerated.

The entire system of public instruction in the city of New York is under the supervisory control of the board of education, consisting of 44 commissioners, two from each ward, one-half of whom are annually elected, with the other school and city officers, at a special election, on the first Tuesday of December. Their term of office is two years, and their services are gratuitous. The schools of each ward are under the immediate supervision of a school board, consisting of the two commissioners representing the ward in the board of education, eight trustees, and two inspectors. The trustees are elected for a term of four years, and so classified that two of their number are annually chosen. The inspectors hold office for two years, one being annually elected. The two commissioners are *ex officio* members of the board of trustees; whose duty it is to have the care and safe keeping of all the school houses and premises, and, under such general rules and regulations as the board of education may adopt, to contract with and employ teachers and janitors, to make general rules for the conduct and management of the schools of their respective wards, furnish all necessary supplies, and make all necessary repairs, alterations and additions to the school buildings and premises. The inspectors are required to visit and examine each of the schools in their respective wards at least twice in each year, and as much oftener as may be necessary; to report annually to the board of education, and to the trustees of their ward, as to the condition of the school buildings, and of the schools generally, the studies pursued in each, the progress of the classes, punctuality of attendance both of scholars and teachers, the order and discipline of the school, and the number and qualifications of the teachers; to examine and audit all accounts for school expenses, certified by the trustees; and, in conjunction with the city superintendent, to license teachers for their respective wards.

The board of education is empowered to establish new schools, whenever required, in any part of the city, and to appropriate the requisite amount of funds for purchasing sites, and building, repairing and furnishing school houses; has the general supervision, through a committee appointed for that purpose, of the Free Academy; to apportion the public money, as well that received from the State as that raised by tax, among the several schools and institutions entitled to participate in it, and to appoint the various officers requisite for the administration of its affairs, and the supervision and examination of the schools. This body holds

stated meetings, for the transaction of business, on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, and special meetings as often as may be required.

Evening schools are established and located by the board ; but, when so established, they are under the immediate direction and control of the trustees of the ward in which they are located, who appoint the teachers, fix their salaries, and regulate the course of study. These schools are in session from the 1st of October to the 1st of March, with the usual holiday vacations.

Upon the city superintendent are devolved the visitation and examination of the several schools, the examination and licensing of teachers, and the preparation of the several reports required by law to the State Superintendent and to the board of education. It is made his duty to visit every school at least once in each year, to inquire into all matters relating to the government, course of instruction, books, studies, discipline, and conduct of such schools, and the condition of the school houses and the schools generally, and to advise and counsel with the trustees in relation to their duties, the proper studies, discipline, and conduct of the schools, the course of instruction to be pursued, and the books of elementary instruction to be used therein ; to examine, ascertain, and report to the board of education whether the provisions of the act in relation to religious sectarian teaching and books have been violated in any of the schools ; to make a monthly report to the board, of the schools visited, with such comments and suggestions as may be deemed necessary and advisable ; to transmit to the respective boards of ward trustees copies of so much of such reports as relates to schools under their management ; to make the annual reports required by law to the department of public instruction ; and "generally, by all the means in his power, under the regulations of the board of education in respect thereto, to promote sound education, elevate the character and qualifications of teachers, improve the means of instruction, and advance the interests of the schools committed to his charge." The assistant superintendents, four in number, are required, under his direction, to visit and examine schools, to assist in the examination of teachers, and to perform such other duties as he may require in the discharge of the functions committed to him by law, and by the regulations of the board.

Every school, every class in each department or school, and every pupil who has been in attendance for an average period of two months, is annually examined in all the studies which have been pursued during the past year, and the results are communicated to the trustees and school officers of the ward in which the school is situated, and entered in a book provided for that purpose in the office of the superintendent. These examinations occupy a period of about eight months' continuous labor during six hours of each school day—the three departments of each ward school and the primary schools being simultaneously examined by the several assistant superintendents. The average number of

classes in each department and school is eight, each class numbering in the grammar schools from twenty to thirty pupils, and in the primary schools and departments from forty to fifty—making, in all, about sixteen hundred classes, and upwards of sixty thousand pupils, embracing five or six branches of study for each pupil. The time of the superintendent being, of necessity, chiefly devoted to the examination of candidates for teachers' certificates and to the details of office business, his visitation of the several schools is supervisory only, though frequent.

The course of study prescribed by the board for all the primary departments and primary schools embraces five grades—the lowest, or fifth, consisting simply of the alphabet and its combination into words and syllables ; the fourth, of spelling, reading, punctuation, definitions, Roman numbers, the elementary principles of mental arithmetic, and addition tables ; the third, of these studies continued and advanced, with the addition of the multiplication table ; the second, of writing and drawing on slates, arithmetic through subtraction, with a continuation of mental arithmetic, spelling, reading, and definitions ; and the first, of tables of weights, time, measures, etc., and short division, with mental arithmetic, spelling, reading, and definitions. Each class is required to be thoroughly reviewed before promotion to a higher grade, and all promotions to the grammar department can be made only upon examination by the principal of such department. The completion of this course usually requires about three years—promotions being made semi-annually. Two hours only of each day are required to be devoted to study, and no lessons are given out for study after school, nor can any books be taken home by the pupils except in the two highest classes. Vocal music and lessons on natural objects and common things are pursued during the entire course. About an hour and a half, at different intervals during the day, is consumed in recesses, and the remainder of the session, exclusive of the study hours, is spent in explanation and instruction by the teachers, and in a variety of simultaneous exercises and recitations.

In the several grammar schools there are six grades of study, each of which is required to be completed in its order, and thoroughly reviewed in all the branches previously pursued in the same department, before entering upon the next. The sixth, or lowest grade, comprises arithmetic—mental and written—through the simple rules and federal money, and the primary geography of America and Europe. In the fifth grade, arithmetic, mental and written, is continued through common fractions ; and primary geography completed. In the fourth grade, arithmetic is continued through decimals and compound numbers ; and the geography of North America and the United States, in detail, is to be pursued, with English grammar, including analysis and simple parsing. In the third grade, arithmetic—mental and written—is continued, through the application, of fractions to compound numbers, simple percentage and interest ; the geography of South America and Europe ; English



grammar, analysis and parsing; and the colonial history of the United States. In the second grade, the studies are mental and written arithmetic through profit and loss, geography through Asia and Africa, English grammar, analysis and parsing, history of the United States through the revolution, and algebra and etymology commenced. In the first, or highest grade, arithmetic and geography are to be completed and reviewed; English grammar, analysis and parsing continued, with the correction of false syntax and composition; etymology, history of the United States completed, algebra continued, Constitution of the United States, astronomy and book-keeping. No lessons to be prepared after school hours are to be given, until such lessons have been fully explained and illustrated by the teacher.

In addition to the course thus prescribed, a supplementary course is marked out, consisting of a thorough review of arithmetic and English grammar, etymology, astronomy and algebra continued, natural philosophy, ancient and modern history, rhetoric, French, German and Latin, or either, and the first four books of geometry. The city superintendent, or one of his assistants, is required, at each annual examination, to designate such of the pupils as may be qualified to enter such supplementary course, and pupils not belonging to the grammar schools are admitted on examination by the principal. Such supplementary class must have an average attendance of at least fifteen pupils.

Exercises in spelling, reading, definition, writing, drawing, and vocal music, are required to be continued in all the classes throughout the entire course. Each class is to be reviewed weekly in all the studies of the preceding week, without the use of text books by teacher or pupil; and every pupil passing a thorough examination in the studies prescribed for the supplementary course is entitled to the highest grade of certificate as a teacher.

In several of the grammar schools French, German, and Latin are taught, and the course of study carried forward an additional grade by the advanced or graduating class. The girls' school, No. 47, Twelfth street, fifteenth ward, has, in addition to the primary, two French departments, in the higher of which all the studies are of an advanced grade.

The discipline and government of the several schools are very superior. All the pupils of each department are assembled punctually at nine o'clock in the large hall—the several teachers being required to be at their post at a quarter before nine. At the first sound of the principal's bell a perfect silence pervades the room, a chapter in the bible is read, the Lord's prayer is then repeated by all the pupils in conjunction with the teachers, and the morning exercises are concluded by singing a hymn, or some appropriate piece of music accompanied by the piano, when the classes proceed regularly and in order to their several recitation or class rooms. In the schools of the fourth, sixth, fourteenth, and one or two other wards, where the pupils are mostly Catholic, the



religious exercises are omitted, and the schools are opened generally by singing.

For admission to the Free Academy for boys, attendance on some of the ward grammar schools for one year is required, and no pupil can be admitted under the age of fourteen years, and without having passed a good examination through the elementary branches of study, including book-keeping and algebra through quadratic equations. The course of study at the academy embraces an introductory, a freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior class, with the usual collegiate studies, in addition to which a course of modern languages, analytical mechanics, physics, law, and civil engineering is appended in the more advanced classes. At the expiration of the term of five years, the usual collegiate degrees are conferred.

To afford an idea of the number of pupils in some of the largest of our public schools, it may not be inappropriate to state that in No. 14, in the twenty-first ward, the average daily attendance in the male department is 433, in the female 367, and in the primary 1,128—in all, 1,928, with 42 teachers; in No. 11, fifteenth ward, 417 in the boys', 380 in the girls', 902 in the primary department—in all, 1,699, with 39 teachers; in No. 17, sixteenth ward, 356 boys, 361 girls, and 950 primary pupils—in all, 1,667, with 46 teachers; in No. 33, twentieth ward, female and primary (no male department), 1,493, with 35 teachers; in No. 45, sixteenth ward, 545 boys, 446 girls, and 845 primary children—in all, 1,836, with 44 teachers; and in No. 48, twentieth ward, 324 boys, 341 girls, and 1,120 primary children—in all, 1,785, with 42 teachers. The aggregate daily attendance in these six schools alone will, therefore, be seen to amount to nearly twelve thousand pupils, or an average of two thousand in each. The average daily attendance of the remaining forty large grammar schools, with primary departments, is about one thousand pupils each, and of the primary schools about half that number.

This daily average, from a variety of causes incidental to a great metropolis, is only equal to about one-half the register number. Very great exertions are made, with the active co-operation of the police officers of the various wards, to secure regularity of attendance; but circumstances beyond the control of parents, officers and teachers, prevent the accomplishment of a greater degree of attendance than has already been attained.

There are three grades of qualifications for teachers' certificates. The lowest entitles the holder to teach in the primary departments or primary schools and evening schools only, and the candidate, in addition to testimonials of character, is required to pass a good examination in reading, spelling, definitions, English grammar, geography, history of the United States, elementary astronomy, arithmetic—mental and written—through profit and loss and percentage, and object teaching. The second grade entitles the holder to teach in any position below that of vice-

principal in the grammar schools, and requires, in addition to the studies above enumerated, etymology, analytical parsing, outlines of general history—ancient and modern; higher arithmetic; algebra, through quadratics, with one unknown quantity; and first and third books of geometry. The highest grade, without which no teacher can hold the position of principal or vice-principal in any grammar school, requires, in addition to the above named studies, higher astronomy, algebra complete, third and fourth books of geometry for females, and spherical geometry and trigonometry for males, natural philosophy, chemistry, rhetoric, and English literature. All candidates are specially examined in reference to modes of teaching, government and discipline; and in deciding upon their qualifications, great weight is given to general intelligence and information, experience in teaching, and skill and facility in communicating knowledge.

The several schools are visited daily by some of the school officers of the ward in which they are situated; and at periodical intervals many of them are in the practice of giving public receptions to the parents and friends of the children, and to visitors generally, the exercises consisting chiefly in music, recitations, declamation, composition, and the exhibition of drawings, embroidery, &c. During the pendency of the present war, nearly every school has been actively engaged in preparing clothing and other necessities for our soldiery, and in administering to the comforts and necessities of the sick and wounded. Many of the teachers and advanced pupils have left the schools and volunteered in the service of the Republic; and military instruction, to a limited extent, is very generally communicated to the male pupils.

I am, sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

S. S. RANDALL, *City Sup't.*

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## CITY OF OSWEGO.

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. Public Instruction* :

In conformity to the requirements of your department, I have the honor of herewith submitting to you a report of the condition of the educational interests of our city.

It is now nine years since the re-organization of the public schools of Oswego under a board of education; from that time they have steadily improved in classification, methods of teaching and discipline.

CLASSIFICATION.—Our schools are divided into four grades or departments, viz: primary, junior, senior and high school. In each grade are three classes, the members of which are exactly together in all their studies. The number of pupils in each class, committed to the care of one teacher, averages from forty-five to fifty pupils. There is a con-

tinuous course of study assigned, embracing twelve years from the time of entering the lowest division of the primary school to the time of graduation from the high school.

At the close of the school year, in March, a class graduates from the high school, and all the classes below are advanced to the next higher step, thus leaving the lowest division of the primary vacant for the organization of a new class at the commencement of the succeeding term; and at no other time during the year is a new class organized. The course of study is so arranged that every pupil and teacher knows exactly the work that is to be accomplished each term and each year. Our aim has been to adapt the course of study, not to the most quick and active minds, with strong, athletic constitutions, nor yet to the slowest and most dull, or those of a frail and nervous constitution, but to those of medium mental and physical ability. Thus we have endeavored to adapt it to the masses of the children, and treat the exceptional cases as such. In the higher grades each class recites in two divisions, and while one section is at recitation the other is preparing the lesson. In the lowest class in the junior and in the primary grade, the exercises are for the most part oral, and the entire class are occupied at once. \* \*

**SPECIAL SCHOOLS.**—Aside from the regular grades, as given above, we have two or three schools of a special character. Among these we will name first the

**EVENING SCHOOL.**—This is designed for pupils who are so occupied as not to be able to attend any day school, but are happy of an opportunity to improve the long unoccupied evenings of winter, in pursuing some of those branches of study of more immediate utility in the common avocations of life. This school has generally been well attended, and characterized by the marked interest of the pupils.

**ARITHMETIC SCHOOLS.**—Of these we have usually had two—one on each side of the river. They are designed for those lads who can attend school only three or four months, during the suspension of business in winter, and who, for the most part, wish to turn their attention only to reading, writing and arithmetic. These, therefore, are the principal branches taught. The regularly graded schools are full at all seasons of the year, so that there would be no room to receive these winter pupils should they desire to enter these departments; and were they to enter, the course of study pursued would not meet their wants, to say nothing of the interruption to these classes. These schools are of the highest importance as a feature of our school system; they are in fact indispensable. They meet the wants of a class of pupils that could not be so well provided for in any other way. They usually open in December and close in March.

**UNCLASSIFIED SCHOOL.**—At the time of the organization of this school, we believe it was an entirely novel feature of a system of graded schools. Many difficulties of this kind were found in the practical working of our



school system. It not unfrequently happened that pupils coming from abroad, having been taught in schools of a different character, or differently classified from our own, found it difficult to get located satisfactorily to themselves. They had perhaps neglected almost entirely mental and practical arithmetic, and to classify them according to their attainments in these branches, would place them at a much lower point than their attainments in other branches would warrant. Many instances of this kind were constantly occurring in families who came to take up their residence with us. It sometimes happened, too, that pupils, through want of proper interest in books and schools earlier in life, or perhaps through necessary detention from school, had grown up almost to manhood, or womanhood, with little or no education, and it is practically impossible to classify such pupils where their attainments would properly locate them; they would not consent to be placed in rooms with children so much younger and smaller than themselves, nor would they find the furniture of these rooms fitted to their convenience.

Still another class whose wants were not fully met were those who desired to pursue certain branches with reference to entering immediately upon business, and did not wish to take up all the studies of the course. Instances such as these were frequently brought to our notice. To meet all these exigencies this unclassified school was opened, in the summer of 1859, and has since been regularly and uninterruptedly maintained, and it may now be regarded as a permanent feature of our system.

**THE TRAINING SCHOOL.**—This department was established April 1, 1861, as an appendage to the high school, for the purpose of preparing teachers for the work of primary instruction in accordance with the most improved methods of teaching, and particularly the methods now adopted in our own schools. Miss Jones, a lady who has for the last fifteen years had charge of the training of teachers, in the Home and Colonial Training Institution, London, was employed to come over and take charge of this class for one year. She entered upon her duties the first of May, 1861. The class consisted of graduates from the high school, a few pupils from abroad, and the teachers of the primary schools. The result of this movement has been eminently satisfactory, and has far exceeded our highest hopes. The methods taught and practiced have been strictly Pestalozzian.

So satisfactory has been the course pursued, that the board prevailed on Miss Jones to remain a portion of this year, and organize a second class. Miss Jones has returned to England, and the school will be continued under the immediate supervision and instruction of the secretary of the board, assisted by Professor Hermann Krusi.

The lessons in the theory or methods of teaching are given three days in the week, after the regular hour for closing the schools, at 3½ o'clock. Two lessons of an hour each are given. One afternoon each week is occupied in criticism lessons. These lessons are given by the member



of the training class, in turn, with a class of children, on such subjects as may be assigned them, or as they may select for themselves, two each week; and the matter and method as well as the manner of giving the lessons are criticised by the other members of the class, and by the training teacher. These criticisms are made with reference to certain established principles. Every Friday afternoon is devoted to arranging the work for the succeeding week with those engaged in the

**PRACTICING SCHOOL.**—This school consists of the three regular grades which constitute each primary department, and occupies five rooms. In each of four rooms are two divisions, while in the fifth—a recitation room—is but one division. In three of the rooms are permanent teachers, who are assisted by members of the training class, while the remaining two are, after the first few weeks, taught entirely by the members of this class. For the first term the teaching of the pupils is confined mostly to reading and number, but as they become more familiar with the methods of teaching, they take up the various object lesson exercises. They alternately observe and practice a fortnight each, going from one grade to another, closing up each round by taking charge of the main room in which there is no principal teacher, thus putting to the test their ability to control and govern a school. The superintendent or principal of the school passes from room to room, overseeing and criticising the work of the pupil teachers, pointing out defects and showing their remedy. At the end of the year an examination is had, and if found sufficiently thorough in their knowledge of the principles of the system and its practical details, a diploma is conferred, on condition that in their practice they have shown that they have power to teach. \* \*

This school has become a necessary appendage to our system, as it is not possible for any but trained teachers to teach in our primary departments, and to this must we necessarily look for our supply of teachers in these schools.

**METHODS OF TEACHING.**—In methods of instruction our schools, if, perhaps, we except the primaries, are not particularly different from those of many other localities. Our aim is to be thorough in everything, and to adapt each subject to the comprehension of the child.

In the introduction of Pestalozzian methods and principles of teaching into the primary department, these schools have been greatly improved.

These methods are based upon the principle: "That, as the different faculties of children are developed at different periods, care should be taken to adapt their lessons to the state of their minds, in order that all the faculties may be called out in the right order.

"That the education of the mind must begin when the exercise of the mind begins, and should follow precisely, both in degree and amount, the natural order of its development.

"That education consists, not in the amount which you can put into the mind from without, but in the amount which it can gain from its own development and exercise from within.

"That education should embrace the united and harmonious development of the whole being ; the moral, the intellectual, and the physical. The cultivation of the intellectual should never be urged forward to the neglect or injury of either the moral or physical.

"That education should begin with the senses, as these are first developed, and upon them the child depends for all his early acquisitions in knowledge ; and upon their acuteness and accuracy must very much depend the character and value of his future attainments.

"That *activity and love of variety* are laws of childhood ; that change is rest. Hence the child should be trained not merely to listen, but to do ; and in all our exercises with young children we must study variety.

"That the measure of information is not what the teacher can give, but what the child can receive.

"That every subject should be reduced to its elements, and but one difficulty presented at a time. In everything be thorough. First develop the idea, and then give the term. Cultivate language.

"That in the process of education we should always proceed from the simple to the difficult ; from the known to the unknown ; from the particular to the general ; from the concrete to the abstract. Not follow the order of the subject, but the order of nature. Synthesis before analysis."

In accordance with these principles we commence, by means of lessons on objects, form, size, color, number, animals, plants, drawing, &c., to train the senses, to quicken perception, cultivate the conceptive faculty, awaken imagination, and lead out the reasoning powers. While these exercises are designed primarily to cultivate the early faculties of childhood, they lay the foundation for the more successful prosecution of the various branches of study pursued in the more advanced stages of education. Thus lessons on objects, by leading the child to observe accurately the *sensible* qualities of various objects in nature, awaken a desire for further investigations, and prepare the way for the study of mineralogy, chemistry, &c. In like manner lessons on plants and animals lead to botany and zoölogy ; lessons on the human body to physiology ; lessons on place to geography ; lessons on form to geometry ; lessons on weight to mechanics ; lessons on size to proportion in drawing and architectural designs ; lessons on number to arithmetic and algebra ; lessons on color to chromotography ; lessons on language to grammar.

EDUCATIONAL MEETING.—At the request of several gentlemen interested in these improved methods of primary instruction, the board of education issued a call for a meeting of a few of the leading educators of the country to examine into these methods, and make a report, setting forth their views in regard to its value and importance as a system of primary education, and the practicability of its general introduction into the schools of this country.

The following persons were present and acted on the committee :

S. B. Woolworth, LL.D., Secretary Board of Regents, Albany, N. Y.; Emerson W. Keyes, Deputy Sup't Pub. Instruction, N. Y.; Hon. David N. Camp, State Sup't Schools, Conn., and Principal of the State Normal School; Geo. L. Farnham, Sup't Schools, Syracuse, N. Y.; S. W. Starkweather, Sup't Schools, Rochester, N. Y.; Hervey B. Wilbur, M. D., Sup't New York State Asylum for Idiots, Syracuse, N. Y.; Prof. D. H. Cochran, Principal State Normal School, Albany, N. Y.; Prof. Wm. F. Phelps, Prin. State Normal School, Trenton, N. J.; W. D. Huntly, Prin. Experimental Depart. State Normal School, Albany, N. Y.; Miss L. E. Ketchum, Prin. of the Experimental Depart. State Normal School, Bloomington, Ill.; Thos. F. Harrison, Prin. Greenwich Av. School, New York city; W. Nicoll, School Commissioner, Suffolk county, N. Y.; James Cruikshank, editor New York Teacher, Albany, N. Y.; Dr. McClellan, clerk of the board of education, Patterson, N. J.

The committee met at the Supreme Court Room, on Tuesday, the 11th of February, and organized by appointing Emerson W. Keyes, chairman, and D. H. Cochran, secretary.

The following gentlemen were appointed a special committee to prepare the report:

Prof. W. F. Phelps, Prof. D. H. Cochran, Hon. David N. Camp, Thos. F. Harrison, Esq., H. B. Wilbur, M. D., W. Nicoll, Esq., Geo. L. Farnham, Esq.

The committee spent three days in this examination. The following is a programme of the exercises had, which will serve to give some idea of its character:

#### PROGRAMME OF EXERCISES

*For Educational Meeting, held at Oswego, Feb. 11, 1862, to examine into a system of Primary Instruction by Object Lessons.*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11.

#### A. M.

10.30 to 11, Organization of Committee and Miscellaneous Business.  
 11 to 11.20, Lesson on Form—review of C Class....Miss Helen Davis.  
 11.20 to 11.40, do Size do do .... do do  
 11.40 to 12.25, do Form and Size, A Class.....Miss Mary Davis.

#### P. M.

2 to 2.15, Lesson on Form, or Elementary Geometry, Miss Kate Whitney.  
 2.15 to 2.45, do Color—review of C Class... ..Miss Helen Davis.  
 2.45 to 3.30, do do A do .....Miss Mary Davis.  
 3.30 to 3.45, Object Lesson, 2d or 3d step.....Miss Helen Davis.  
 3.45 to 4, Review of terms developed in Object Lessons, do do

#### Evening.

7.30 to 8.15, Object Lesson, 5th step—B junior.....Miss L. C. Plumb.  
 8.15, Paper on the Distinctive Principles of the Pestalozzian System.....Miss M. E. M. Jones.



8.30, Paper on the History of the Rise and Progress of Object Teaching ..... N. A. Calkins, Esq.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12.

*A. M.*

9 to 9.25, Lesson on an Animal, 3d step.....Miss A. P. Funnell.  
 9.25 to 10, do Animals, 4th step.....Mrs. Case.  
 10 to 10.45 Review of A Class on Mammals .....Miss M. Roe.  
 10.45 to 11.15, Lesson on a Shell, 3d step.....Mrs. Case.  
 11.15 to 12, do Shells, 4th step.....Miss A. P. Funnell.

*P. M.*

2 to 2.30, Lesson on Place—review of C Class.....Miss Helen Davis.  
 2.30 to 3, do do do A do .....Miss M. Roe.  
 3 to 3.15, do Number, do C do .....Miss H. Davis.  
 3.15 to 3.45, do do do A do .....Miss M. Roe.  
 3.45 to 4, do Language, do C do .....Miss Helen Davis.  
 4 to 4.15, do do do A do .....Miss A. P. Funnell.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13.

*A. M.*

Inspection of the Schools.

*P. M.*

2 to 2.30, Phonic Reading, 1st, 2d and 3d steps—review of method of learning forms and names of letters, sounds, &c...Miss H. Davis.  
 2.30 to 3.30, Phonic Reading, 4th, 5th and 6th steps.....Miss M. Roe.  
 3.30 to 3.35, Gymnastics.  
 3.35 to 3.50, Lesson on Plants.....Mrs. Case.  
 3.50 to 4.10, do Weight.....Miss H. Davis.

*Evening.*

7.30, Report of Committee, Discussion, Miscellaneous Business, and Adjournment.

At the close of the convention, Prof. Phelps, in behalf of the committee, read a lengthy and able report, which has been published in pamphlet form, together with Mr. Calkins' address, Miss Jones' paper, and a digest of the exercises.

EDUCATIONAL LECTURES.—During the summer term our teachers enjoyed the benefit of a course of valuable lectures on "Mental Philosophy in its Practical Application to the Education of Children" from the Rev. B. G. Northrop, State Agent of the Board of Education of Massachusetts.

These lectures were eminently practical, and gave a new impulse, and added fresh interest to the work in which we are engaged.

We were also favored with a very valuable lecture from E. W. Keyes, at that time acting superintendent of public instruction.

SCHOOL SESSIONS.—Our school year is divided into three terms—the first commencing April 15th, and continuing thirteen weeks; the second commencing September 1st, and continuing sixteen weeks; the third



extends from January 1st to April 1st—thirteen weeks—making, in all, forty-two weeks school session, and ten weeks vacation.

**FIVE HOURS SESSIONS.**—During the past year the board have adopted the plan of having but five hours school sessions each day, and so well are they pleased with the working of it, and so manifestly is it in accordance with public sentiment, that they have decided to continue it as a permanent arrangement. Five hours of school confinement each day, is quite as much as is consistent with a proper regard for the physical development of the child; and it seems to be the general testimony of the teachers, that nearly or quite as much is accomplished by the children in their studies as with six hours sessions. This arrangement seems also necessary, particularly in the primary schools, in order to give teachers time to prepare the various lessons for their schools. In view of all these facts, it seems highly probable that the board will never return to the six hours sessions.

**TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.**—These are held every Saturday morning from 9½ to 12 o'clock. The object of these meetings is, as stated, in the regulation requiring the attendance of teachers, for the purpose of "mutual instruction and improvement, and, by recitations and general exercises, to strive to perfect the methods of teaching and discipline in the public schools."

They are generally attended by all the teachers, and have been productive of great good to our schools.

**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.**—In the spring, at the opening of the term, children are allowed to enter the schools at five years of age. At no other season are they allowed to enter under six years of age, and then only on their being prepared to enter some class already organized. By this arrangement only one new class is formed, and this at the beginning of the year. This avoids a very serious evil that commonly occurs in the lowest division of the primary school—an indefinite multiplication of classes. Our schools are well attended. We believe that cases of truancy and vagrancy are very rare. Whenever they are known to exist, they are immediately reported to the proper authorities, and dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the statute on this subject. We may safely say that there are very few children in our city of proper age, except those actually engaged in some employment, who are not in our public schools.

**SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.**—The aim of the board is to make the discipline of the school room, as nearly as possible, like that of a well-regulated family. To resort to the rod is a summary way of disposing of the many difficulties that arise in the school room, and teachers too frequently yield to the temptation of using it.

It is required of every teacher to report immediately to the office of the board every case of corporal punishment, stating definitely its character and the reasons therefor. We are happy to say that moral influences are steadily gaining ground in the control of our schools as op-

posed to physical punishments ; and we expect to see the day when the rod shall, not merely in *theory* but in *fact*, be used *only* as a “dernier resort.”

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—Aside from Catholic schools, we have but eleven children in private schools. There are probably not ten children residents of the city who go abroad to school. All grades of our schools are patronized by all classes of citizens. We intend to act upon the principle that the public schools should be made good enough for the best, and that they cannot be made too good for the poorest. At the time of the organization of these schools nine years ago, there were no less than seventeen private schools, with an aggregate attendance of six hundred and thirty pupils—to say nothing of a large number who went abroad. There were at that time in the public schools twenty-one teachers, with an average attendance of thirty-eight pupils. These teachers received, as compensation for their services in the case of females, from \$150 to \$220, and in one instance \$240 per annum. Male teachers received from \$300 to \$400, and in one instance \$600. There are now in these schools fifty teachers, with an average attendance of forty-nine pupils each, and the compensation paid female teachers ranges from \$225 to \$400, and males from \$600 to \$1,000. These statistics are, perhaps, as good a commentary as we can give on the progress of the schools, and their popularity.

FREE LIBRARY.—Soon after the organization of the board of education, the public school libraries were all consolidated into one. It now numbers three thousand three hundred volumes, and is free to all citizens. In addition to this, the Hon. Gerrit Smith made the munificent donation to the city of \$26,000 for the establishment of a free library.

These libraries are now both deposited in an elegant building erected for the purpose, and together they form an invaluable library, both for circulation and reference.

THE ORPHAN ASYLUM.—This is located on an eminence overlooking the city and country, and the building presents a fine, imposing appearance. There are about forty-seven inmates. The teacher is employed at the expense of the public school fund. The pupils are also supplied with books and apparatus from the same source.

EXAMINATIONS.—These are held at the close of each term. The examinations at the close of the spring and fall terms are designed as a review of the studies of those terms. The annual examination, which occurs at the close of the winter term, is designed to be a critical review of the entire ground gone over during the year ; and in the case of those classes that are to be transferred from one grade to another, there is a review of the entire course of the grade to which the class belongs. In these examinations the name of every pupil in all the schools below the high school, except the two lower classes in the primary schools, is entered in a book prepared for the purpose, and a personal account kept with each one, as to the number of questions answered correctly, and the

number answered incorrectly. The questions are all selected by the examining committee, and no teacher or pupil has any knowledge of what they are to be until put to the class.

The last annual report of the board of education, which has been forwarded to your Department, will give a very clear idea of the character of these examinations, as also of the subjects of study and methods of teaching in our schools.

Respectfully submitted.

E. A. SHELDON, *City Supt. of Schools.*

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## CITY OF ROCHESTER.

ROCHESTER, *December 29, 1862.*

To the Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Supt. Public Instruction :*

Dear Sir—In compliance with your request for a statement in regard to the public schools of this city, the undersigned respectfully submits an outline of their history and progress, *in periods*, from their commencement to the present time, as follows:

The original free school law of this city came into effect June 15th, 1841.

It provided for an annual special election, to occur in June, for the selection of two commissioners from each ward, to constitute the board of education, which board was authorized to appoint a school superintendent.

Accordingly, on the 15th of June, 1841, there being then but five wards in the city, Messrs. George R. Clark and Carlos Cobb, of the 1st; Messrs. John Williams and Silas Cornell, of the 2d; Messrs. John McConnell and Charles G. Cummings, of the 3d; Messrs. Moses Long and Henry O'Reilly, of the 4th; and Messrs. Harry Pratt and Levi A. Ward, of the 5th wards, were duly elected to be our first board of education. On the 5th day of July following, this board appointed Isaac F. Mack, Esq., to be our first school superintendent. The old school district organizations, with local officers, remained unchanged; the schools in each of which were allowed a male principal and female assistants, according to the number of pupils. The pupils were assorted into three general divisions, named primary, intermediate, and senior; the male and female pupils were seated and instructed separately, constituting duplicate classes, of equal degree of advancement throughout, in each school, and the public school fund was apportioned to each, in parts corresponding to the ratio of the average attendance at each school during the year, by which unequal method, some districts were provided with four, some six, some eight, some ten, and some twelve months of school each year. This condition of things continued during the first seven years of trial of the free school law—district organization, classification



of pupils, and methods of instruction remaining the same as before its enactment, so that, so far forth, the essential benefits of the new law consisted in providing general and free tuition, and in establishing, at least partially, a system of general supervision. Our schools, doubtless, during these seven years, occupied as much of the public attention, and held as high a place in the public esteem, as ever at any subsequent period. Those of us who were familiar here during that period, will recollect with what pride and satisfaction our citizens cherished the schools, pointing them out to strangers as models of excellence—recommending the establishment of similar systems elsewhere—upholding our schools and all connected with their good conduct as teachers or officers, in public and in private, with a warmth and earnestness which secured for them the confidence of our people of all classes, and gave to them a reputation abroad, which, in point of excellence, had never been fully deserved. There are at the present time hundreds of our fellow citizens who suppose that our schools have been retrograding ever since in point of excellence, and who hold those who were instrumental in establishing the system and connected with its early conduct as having been eminently endowed with wisdom and foresight, and are wont to refer to them to this day as authority in doubtful questions relating to schools. The truth is, that during these first seven years, nothing whatever in regard to our system of schools had been established, except that tuition was to be free, and to be provided by tax indiscriminately levied on all taxable property of the city. The teachers, doubtless, were as able and devoted to their business then as now, and being borne along in the current of the popular favor, it was comparatively easy and pleasant to perform their duties; but then there existed but little unity of views or efforts. The school in each district constituted a little kingdom of itself, and each teacher, even of the same school, acted independently of every other, all striving to obtain for themselves the larger share of the public applause. Certain members of our present corps taught here during all this while. Mr. Adams, of No. 12; Miss Walker, of No. 14; Professor Edward Webster taught one year, and the undersigned taught three years. These witnesses are competent, and can testify whether or not the conclusions following are correct:

*First.* That during the period referred to, the individual efforts of teachers were fully equal to those of the present time, yet for want of system and oneness of purpose, the general results obtained were comparatively meagre and unsatisfactory.

*Second.* That while the schools of that period deserved the high position they occupied in the public esteem, the schools of the present time deserve even a greater degree of the public confidence; it is nevertheless awarded to and enjoyed by them comparatively in greatly diminished proportions.

*Then* private schools in our midst found but meagre encouragement and support, and the attendance on the public schools was comparatively



greater. Now private schools abound in every section of the city, and divide with us unjustly the patronage and judgment of the public. Many wonder why this is so, but it is a simple matter easily comprehended. The truth is, that our system in its early history was but indifferently managed. Those charged with its chief direction, instead of employing every energy they possessed to master the elements, to bring order out of confusion, to perfect and give efficacy and character to the system, either from incompetency or wanton carelessness, seemed content to enjoy the *eclat* which the enactment of the free school law afforded, and spent their efforts in mutual glorification, inviting public attention to the munificent free school system which they had produced.

This tide of popular favor, based on the humane principle embodied in our law declaring tuition free, and in so far rendering the blessings of education accessible as a common inheritance of all classes of children and youth in our community, had now, in about seven years of uninterrupted favor, spent its force, and began to recede.

During this early history, perhaps more had been expected of the superintendent, as head of the system, than was just, and Mr. I. F. Mack, a man of graceful and winning manners, possessing much knowledge of men and things, varied accomplishments, and exceedingly popular withal—although he really knew but little of schools or school systems—retired at the end of five years service, and within two years thereafter, the board appointed three different persons in the endeavor to fill his place, but with indifferent success.

Our people were particularly dissatisfied with these frequent changes, and a law was enacted taking the power of appointment from the board, and making the office of school superintendent elective. Accordingly, at the special election of June, 1848, a new superintendent, for the first time, was duly elected by the people; and just here commenced a new period in the history of our schools.

FIRST.—The conviction had obtained in the public mind that some radical changes were requisite to place the system on better footing—restore confidence in the schools, and increase their usefulness. Accordingly, after free and full consultation with school officers and teachers, three important changes were determined on as follows :

*First.* To seat, classify, and instruct the pupils of each school strictly according to ability and attainment, without regard to sex—thus avoiding the double labor of instructing duplicate classes of equal rank, as under the old arrangement.

*Second.* To provide for the continuance of school in each district an equal number of months in each year, by consolidating the school fund and regarding it as belonging to each school equally according to necessity, instead of the unequal and unjust apportionment plan, practiced under the old arrangement.

*Third.* To amend the school law so as to abolish the old district system, with local officers, altogether; to constitute instead *one school district*,

embracing the entire city of Rochester ; to empower the board of education by simple vote to divide this one district into so many subdivisions as might be necessary to *control attendance* on the schools of as many different grades as might from time to time be established. For example, the division of *first order* to consist of sections embracing the entire city, to control attendance on the primary. The *second order* to consist of sections to control attendance on the intermediate. The *third order* to consist of sections to control attendance on the senior. The *fourth order* to consist of the entire city, to control attendance on the high school. Here, then, we have four distinct orders of districts, of different number and size, but each order embracing the entire city, to enable us to equalize the schools and control attendance on the different grades. The work of effecting these three important radical changes was commenced immediately after the election of June, 1848, and was attended, step by step, by earnest opposition from local district organizations—who discovered valuable franchises about to escape from them—so that nearly two years had transpired before the entire work was effectually accomplished.

School districts which had by the unequal apportionment enjoyed school sessions ten months and twelve months in the year, did not cheerfully yield their advantages and consent to fraternize on common ground with those comparatively inconsiderable schools which had hitherto been stinted to annual sessions of four, six, and eight months. Thus the scheme of consolidating the school fund was strenuously opposed.

So also the idea had obtained, and long been practiced upon here as elsewhere—in accordance with what was considered the due observance of the proprieties of life—that male and female pupils at school should be seated and instructed separately ; and our proposition to ignore this distinction lost us many advocates and supporters whose sensibilities overmastered their reason, and a front of opposition appeared against this measure and maintained its ground for nearly a year ; thus the scheme of dispensing with duplicate grades of pupils of equal rank was earnestly opposed.

These two changes were, however, accomplished during the year 1848, and in the spring of 1849 the school officers set to work in earnest to abolish the old district system. The discussion was continued, public and private, during the spring and summer months of that year. Energetic and even angry opposition was encountered on all occasions ; and in the autumn our board sent the superintendent east to make a tour of observation, seeking light as to schools and school systems best adapted to large cities and towns. This reconnoissance abroad occupied several weeks, during which the schools of Lowell, Newburyport, Boston, Providence, and Philadelphia were pretty thoroughly visited, their merits canvassed, and their systems of organization compared.

During this visit at Philadelphia, the first meeting of what has since become the National Teachers' Association chanced to be held there.

By a concerted scheme of correspondence, this meeting of the friends of popular education, consisting of representatives from nearly every State, had been planned—not intending that the meeting should be repeated simply with the view of comparing notes, examining systems adapted for city and country, and instructing the public mind, to the end that State, city, and town systems of public education might be perfected and rendered more acceptable.

This was a very large meeting, and its proceedings were full of interest and instruction. Horace Mann and Barnas Sears represented Massachusetts; Com. Allen and Nathan S. Bishop represented Rhode Island; Henry Barnard, Connecticut; Eliphalet Nott, New York; Bishop Potter, Pennsylvania; H. H. Barney, Ohio; Mr. Sherman, Michigan; Dr. Reyerson, Canada; Dr. Monmonnier, Maryland; Mr. Duncan, Louisiana.

Horace Mann presided and directed the business proceedings. The first day and evening were spent in hearing descriptions of the educational systems—embracing common school, college, and university—of each State having systems, for which purpose the States were called alphabetically, and some one who was able volunteered to represent his own State. The statements of President Nott, for New York, and Horace Mann, for Massachusetts, were most able and instructive, and attracted, by far, most attention. Teachers from this State who were present had but vague ideas of the magnificent system of education—its plan and its endowment, in general and in detail—as it appeared when properly set forth by its most learned and eloquent champion, President Nott.

He showed himself master of his subject; and, entirely without premeditation, was able to set forth the entire educational history of our great State from the beginning with such fullness of fact, aptness of illustration, and fervor of feeling as made every son of New York present proud of the Empire State, her noble system of education, and of President Nott, its ablest representative. The second day and evening were spent in hearing descriptions of the local educational systems of the large cities of the country, discussing their merits and comparing their excellencies. Horace Mann described the system of Boston and that of several other large cities of Massachusetts; Nathan S. Bishop described the system of Providence; Joseph McKeen described the system of New York; Prof. Hart the system of Philadelphia; Dr. McJilton that of Baltimore; H. H. Barney that of Cincinnati; Prof. Duncan that of New Orleans.

Each speaker, in a conversational manner, represented the system of schools in his town, their organization, methods of instruction, manner of support, plan of supervision; and after furnishing a complete outline, stood and was questioned until the subject in hand was fully understood. In this manner the school systems of our great cities were subjected to the scrutiny of the most competent masters, and the result, or at least one result of this comparative analysis, was the conviction that of all the systems represented there, that of the city of Providence was the most simple and combined the most excellencies.



In the abolishment of our old district system and the re-organization of our plan of schools, the essential features of the Providence system were kept in view—formed our model in fact, and were mostly reproduced.

The superintendent returned from his eastern trip, embodied his observations in his annual report, giving a detailed description of different systems, particularly of the Providence system, which was published in the annual report of Nov., 1849. Our board of education, particularly Samuel G. Andrews, Edwin Pancost, Geo. W. Parsons, Samuel D. Porter, and F. L. Durand, took up the matter of re-organization, and in concert with our Mayor, Levi A. Ward, and Moses Chapin of the city council, the draft of a new law was speedily produced, agreed upon, forwarded to the Legislature as soon as it convened, became a statute in March, 1850, and was at once put in force here. Whoever will look into the superintendent's annual report of Nov., 1849, will see that our law of 1850, in every essential particular, is a copy, almost verbatim, of the model presented in that document.

With all of our subsequent minor amendments, the substance of that law has never been touched—the present *district organization and plan* of schools. It will not need to be changed—it stands the test of experience. In this matter our city led the way in this state. Mr. Sheldon, of Oswego, prepared the school law of that city, and he copied the essential provisions from our annual report of Nov., 1849. Other cities have since copied our law and the Oswego law. The old plan still remains in Providence. It is simple and wieldy, and probably no better plan can be devised.

No essential feature of the law of March, 1850, has been, or need be changed. The addition of the fourth general grade—our Free Academy—and the subdivisions of the senior, intermediate, and primary grades were all provided for in the law of 1850.

What we have been trying, and still have need to learn, is to administer the provisions of that law to the best advantage.

We have had the same law longer than Oswego, and every other advantage which they have had ; but they, it must be confessed, have understood their opportunities better than we, and have gone a long way before us. All the moral and intellectual energies of that city have been garnered in, and wielded to build up, give character and intelligent direction to their school system. Private schools find no patronage there, and the public school system is cheerfully accepted as *the* educational system for all classes of their people.

SECOND.—These three proposed changes had now been effectually accomplished within the two years between June, 1848, and June, 1850, and our schools may be considered to have fairly entered upon a new period ; and thus re-organized and rejuvenized, a good degree of the public confidence was regained, and for a time it was reasonably hoped that our schools, under wise counsel and direction, would, after a few



years, attain to as high a degree of excellence as their best friends had any right to expect. Truth, however, requires it be stated, that the golden opportunities afforded under the new impulse of the times, were not adequately improved, and at the end of three or four years a culminating point was again reached, and thereafter until 1857, the schools were but able barely to hold the even tenor of their way. During this period of seven years, from 1850 to 1857, considerable was done in the matter of providing new school buildings and school houses. Nos. 3, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14—*old*—and 16, afford samples. It is evident that these buildings were constructed without reference to any general plan—no two of them alike, and not a good one in the whole number, showing want of intelligent direction in the matter of school architecture, in which matter we have proceeded without system and without intelligence from the beginning.

During these seven years the matter of establishing our highest grade—Free Academy—and of perfecting the subdivisions and classification of senior, intermediate, and primary grades, which had been specially provided for in our law of 1850, was for one reason or another entirely neglected.

It must be stated also, that during this period the fatal practice obtained of electing members of the board of education with special reference to accomplishing specific and often unworthy objects; and this narrowing down, venal policy, gradually instructed our people to understand that one man, of whatever character, elected for the purpose of casting a certain vote, or of pursuing a *prescribed* course of official conduct, was as good and effective as another; and thus our board of education gradually from year to year lost character and caste, and became an instrument for dispensing the favor and patronage which the administration of our school system offered. Thus in time, our board of education, which, according to the true idea, ought to be the most respectable civic body of the city, composed of men whose personal character and active sympathies should constitute a tower of strength and command the public judgment—so far misconceived their position as to follow, *afar off*, the shade of our common council, resembling a cross between that body and a ward caucus, and so—if truth must be told—fell into deserved contempt. Is it wonderful, then, that while our system of schools made no outward sign, except through their appointed organ—the board of education—it should also have suffered to some extent a withdrawal of the public confidence?

THIRD.—In 1857, a new period in the history of our schools not yet completed, was entered upon—signalized by the completion of our system of general gradation, and the consequent subdivision and classification of all of the junior grades—since which time, for the most part, their substantial success and gradual approach to a higher standard of excellence have been recognizable and far more acceptable than during any other equal number of years since their organization.

And now let those who come after us administering the affairs of the schools—teachers and officers—adequately avail themselves of the instructions afforded by our past experience—lessons which have been too dearly learned—then their onward progress shall be assured through coming years, the history of which, if not more instructive, shall at least be far more satisfactory.

GRADES OF SCHOOLS.—Our schools are divided into four general departments, as follows :

- 1 Free Academy.
- 10 Grammar schools.
- 16 Intermediate schools.
- 16 Primary schools.

The *Free Academy* was established in the year 1857, under the name of Central High School, and was recognized by the Regents of the University in the summer of 1862, under the corporate name of the "*Rochester Free Academy*." Since its organization to the present time, it has enjoyed and has deserved the reputation of being one of the most thorough and successful academic schools in this State.

Annual accessions are made to the Academy at commencement time, directly from the grammar schools, on a general public examination, to be admitted to which, applicant pupils must have the written recommendation of their respective principals.

Two hundred pupils only can be, and usually are, accommodated; the course of study for whom is prescribed for terms—three annually—and requires four years to complete.

The *grammar departments* are severally provided with a male principal, and one, two, or three female assistants, depending on number of pupils; the pupils are subdivided into first, second, and third grades.

*Intermediate departments* are provided with female principals, with assistants according to number of pupils; the pupils are subdivided into fourth and fifth grades.

*Primary departments* are provided with principal and assistants in like manner; the pupils are subdivided into sixth and seventh grades.

Grammar department, three grades; intermediate department, two grades; primary department, two grades. Total, seven grades.

Definite courses of study have heretofore been prescribed for *each grade*; and promotions from grade to grade have been allowed at the close of any term of our school year.

The school year consists of forty-four weeks, divided into three terms, of which the fall term commences on the first Monday of September; the winter term on the first Monday of January; the summer term on the first Monday of May.

The experience of a few years has taught us that our course of study prescribed for the different grades, although limited, is still very indefinite. That our *three* grades in the grammar, *two* in the intermediate, *two* in the

primary, ought to be modified, so that we shall have the greatest number of grades in the primary, next in the intermediate, and the least number in the grammar departments. That promotions from grade to grade in these different departments ought, as a general rule, to be made but *once* annually, and then simultaneously.

Accordingly the labor of our "institutes" fortnightly during the term time for the past six months has been, in the main, to try to discuss and determine these matters intelligently. Some of the results of these discussions may be indicated as follows:

As to cities having elaborate school systems, the *grades* of pupils differ widely in regard to number; some having four, some six, some seven, some nine, some ten, and some different numbers. We think that the simplest and most rational way is to have the grades based on the number of years in school. For example, what ought the child to be expected to accomplish the first *year* in school? Then during the second year, and thus on until all subjects within the range of a common school education shall have been thoroughly mastered.

Our experience is, that allowing a pupil to enter school at the age of five years, about nine years will *ordinarily* be required to become grounded and established in the usual branches allowed to be taught in our best common schools.

Let the number of grades be based on *years*—divide the year into *three*, or whatever number of terms—prescribe the course of study for each year, according to the number of terms, precisely *so much for each term*—then promote from grade to grade but once annually, but simultaneously in all the schools.

*Within* any one year, however, promotions might be made, without form, from *class to class*, if pupils shall be found qualified.

To prescribe definitely how *much* and *what* pupils ought to be required to learn, in terms, from year to year, is a difficult task; though to construct a *general outline*, each school and each teacher to select and appropriate, according to individual taste or inclination, according to the usual practice, is easy enough.

We find it difficult to determine the *subjects* of study, and the *quantity* of each, proper to be assigned to the different grades, and at the same time, *methods* of instruction to be systematically pursued by the teachers, require to be carefully considered.

It is most important, however, to select proper *objects* of instruction, as there doubtless is less difference in mere *methods* than is commonly supposed. As a general rule, the method which succeeds in arousing the energies of the mind, causing it to put forth *its strength* to overcome difficulties in the acquirement of knowledge—whatever its name—is always the best. In the matter of *methods*, there are guides, many and valuable; but the *true* teacher, with or without guides, rarely fails to invent methods by which to achieve success; while the mechanical teacher, with whatever guides, inevitably fails of success.



With our present experience, we are not likely to abandon our old system altogether, and substitute in its room the Pestalozzian plan. Of course, we could not if we would; but it is also true that we would not if we could—though we do earnestly intend to improve and quicken our system by *adding* to it a systematic course of lessons on objects and familiar science, to be taught orally, in consecutive order, in all grades.

The above, and kindred topics, are occupying much of our attention here at present; and having already extended these lines beyond what was intended, further writing is foreborne, with the respectful request that you wait for the facts and statistics, which it was thought might be of some public interest, until the appearance of the twentieth annual report, in March next.

D. HOLBROOK, *Superintendent.*

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## CITY OF SCHENECTADY.

### *To the Superintendent of Public Instruction :*

The following statements concerning the school interests of this city are respectfully submitted:

The whole number of children and youths in the city, of school age, were found by the census of last July to be 3,062; and of these about eighteen hundred have been admitted to membership in the public schools during the past year. Such children only, however, are entitled to admission as have attained to the age of seven years.

Besides the public schools, there are in the city two private schools, numbering each about twenty-five pupils, one Catholic parochial school, and one colored school, which is a free school, and is attended by about twenty scholars.

The Union free school substantially embraces all the public schools in the city, all being under the same supervision, subject to the same rules and regulations, and entitled to the same or equal privileges. There are three small schools, situated in the extreme parts of the city, for local convenience, which cannot be so satisfactorily graded; but pupils from these schools can enter the Central Union school as soon as they have completed their primary studies. The Union school is divided into primary, intermediate, higher English, and academic departments, all of which are free to the children of families residing in the city, except that tuition is charged for instruction in music, the modern languages, drawing and painting.

The school is supported by the income from the State School Fund, the Literature Fund, city taxes, tuition, and the Nott Trust Fund.

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT.—The preparation requisite for admission to this department is a good knowledge of the common elementary branches of an English education. The whole number of students taught in it



during the past year was 229, and their average age was sixteen years. The usual number in attendance is about 130.

The studies pursued are as follows: English grammar, history, rhetoric, botany, physiology, natural and mental philosophy, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, the Latin, Greek and modern languages, music, drawing and painting. Special attention is also given to reading, spelling and defining, composition and declamation.

The school buildings of the city are for the most part commodious and well furnished.

The school library, containing three thousand volumes, is judiciously selected, and it is read by many of the pupils with considerable interest.

Our pupils have generally manifested much zeal in being promptly and constantly at school. Their average attendance the past year has been ninety-three per cent.; and I have pleasure in saying that they have made commendable progress in their studies.

Twenty-nine teachers are employed in our schools, with salaries ranging from \$200 to \$1,500. Twenty-four of these teachers are females, and ten have been educated in normal schools. Though it is the purpose of our board of education to engage such teachers only as may be thoroughly qualified for the position assigned them, still the demand for higher attainments and greater efficiency in teachers is urgent.

BENJAMIN STANTON, *Superintendent.*

SCHENECTADY, *February 24, 1863.*

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## CITY OF BUFFALO.

BUFFALO, *December 20, 1862.*

HON. VICTOR M. RICE:

Dear Sir—On the first day of October I transmitted to you the required tabular statement relative to the public schools of the city of Buffalo for the year 1862, and agreeably to your request I take pleasure in furnishing you the following in addition to that statement:

The number of school districts in the city is 33. In each of these districts, schools have been taught twelve months, including the usual vacations.

In addition to these, a central high school and a school for colored children have been taught the same length of time.

There are also two orphan asylums in which schools have been maintained by the common council, viz: The Protestant Orphan Asylum, on Virginia street, and St. Vincent's Catholic Orphan Asylum, situated on the corner of Batavia and Ellicott streets. The number of orphan children taught in them during the year was 378.

The number of public school houses, besides these asylums, is 35. Of this number, 23 are built of brick, 11 of wood, and 1 of stone. Nearly

all of them are in good repair, furnished with libraries, school apparatus and modern school desks.

Many of the playgrounds are quite ample, and beautifully ornamented with shade trees, shrubbery, &c.

Below I give the number and location of the several school houses, the number of departments, and the total number of pupils taught in each school during the year 1862:

No. of District.	Location of School House.	No. of Dep'tments.	No. of pupils taught.
1.	Seventh street.....	3	808
2.	Terrace .....	2	430
3.	Perry street .....	3	737
4.	Elk do .....	3	1,165
5.	Seneca do .....	3	927
6.	South Division street.....	3	823
7.	South Division do .....	3	574
8.	Church street .....	2	412
9.	Vine do (colored).....	2	192
10.	Delaware do .....	3	640
11.	Elm do .....	2	478
12.	Spruce do .....	3	1,213
13.	Oak do .....	3	686
14.	Franklin do .....	4	802
15.	Oak do .....	3	1,089
16.	Delaware do .....	3	461
17.	Main do .....	1	69
18.	School do .....	2	375
19.	North Washington street.....	2	305
20.	Amherst do .....	3	691
21.	Bird avenue.....	1	86
22.	Main street.....	1	68
23.	Pine Hill road.....	1	95
24.	Best street.....	2	270
25.	Batavia do .....	1	44
26.	Red Jacket do .....	1	70
27.	Seneca do .....	1	85
28.	White's Corners road.....	1	87
29.	White's Corners road.....	1	43
30.	Turnpike road.....	1	117
31.	Emslie street .....	3	657
32.	Cedar do .....	3	793
33.	Elk do .....	3	197
	Central High School, Franklin street.....	3	348
		<hr/> 78	<hr/> 15,836
		<hr/>	<hr/>

When we compare the number of school houses and the number of children taught the present year with the same particulars in 1838, it will be seen that our schools have kept pace with the growth of the city. The number of school houses in the city in 1838 was 9 ; there are now 35. Number of pupils attending the former year was 3,622 ; the number attending in 1862 was 15,836.

In 1837 a law was passed creating the office of city superintendent of schools, and under this law R. W. Haskins, Esq., a gentleman well qualified for the position, was appointed, without any salary. Near the close of that year he resigned.

N. P. Sprague, Esq., was appointed in his place, but refused to serve.

Mr. O. G. Steele was appointed, and accepted the position at the enormous salary of \$75 per year. To this public spirited gentleman, more than to any other individual, are the citizens of Buffalo indebted for their excellent system of public schools.

In the spring of 1838 the number of schools was seven.

In the fall of 1838 several public meetings were held, at which the Hon. Albert H. Tracy presided, and a committee, consisting of the following named gentlemen, viz ; Josiah Trowbridge, Chas. S. Pierce, F. W. Atkins, A. C. Moore, J. R. Prince, J. W. Beals, S. S. Case, Lucius Storrs, J. J. Brown, N. H. Gardner, H. Root, M. Bristol, S. N. Calender, H. Shumway, Le Grand Marvin, N. K. Hall, O. G. Steele, N. Lyman, N. Wilgus, Moses Baker, D. Galusha, N. Vosburgh, S. Chamberlain, J. Miller and S. Caldwell, were appointed to procure information concerning the schools, and report a plan of action for their improvement. This committee recommended the adoption of the free school system.

In the winter of 1837-8 the first school law applicable to the city of Buffalo was passed by the legislature. This law did not, however, provide for entirely free schools. The price of tuition was, in 1838, two dollars per quarter. In that year public school house No. 8 was built; and it was objected to violently by many as extravagantly large and expensive, the cost of site and house being \$4,100.

In February, 1839, the city charter was so amended as to make the public schools of the city *entirely free*.

The number of pupils taught during the year 1840, was 4,450; and the total salaries paid teachers, was \$6,652.83.

In 1841 the salaries of the male teachers ranged from \$500 to \$750 ; females from \$150 to \$250.

The first three-story school house in the city was built in 1845.

In the third story of this building, on the 16th of February, 1846, was established the germ of the present central high school. But three years previous to this, in the year 1843, Mr. Caldwell, who was then superintendent of schools, in his annual report to the common council, in speaking of a central school or third department, said :

“ A third department (central school) should be established designed to receive the advanced scholars from the different districts. Higher



qualifications should be required of teachers in this department, and children to be entitled to admission should pass an examination before some competent committee. In this higher department, the more advanced studies should be taught; scholars should be allowed to complete their education to fit them for the various duties of life, and even to prepare such as should choose for admission into the higher seminaries of learning. When this is accomplished, the city may well boast of her system of public instruction. Then will all classes in society—the children of the merchant, the mechanic and the laborer—be placed, in respect to education, on an equal footing; then will the main pillar in our edifice be erected on a foundation which neither time nor accident can shake.”

In the following year, the superintendent again called the attention of the council to this important subject. And again, in 1844, Mr. Hawley spoke of it in his report as follows: “Such a school would act upon the higher departments in the same manner as these now do upon the primaries. There would be presented, to the pupils of the higher departments, a motive to exertion, in the possibility and prospect of promotion to the central school, which would, doubtless, have an effect similar to and more powerful than that already, in some measure, produced by the establishment of a grade of promotion from the primary to the higher departments of the schools.” It was not until the year 1845 that this subject was favorably considered by the common council. In that year the seed, which had been previously sown, began to show signs of germination. A resolution was passed by the council authorizing the superintendent to open a third department, and on the 16th day of February, 1846, the central school was opened in the third story of public school house No. 7, under the direction of Mr. O. G. Steele, who was superintendent at the time. In the next year’s report the superintendent, in speaking of the prospects of the school, said: “This school has been conducted with great ability through the year, and its success, as a branch of our common school system in elevating the standard of instruction, has fully answered the reasonable expectations of the community.” At the commencement of the last term, in the year 1847, the common council established another third department, or a branch central school in public school house No. 10, on the other side of the city. The wisdom of this measure was questioned, on account of the reduction of the attendance in No. 7; but, after a time, it was thought that the condition of the two third departments had fully vindicated the action taken at that time.

In 1849, the superintendent recommended to the council the removing of the central school, or the remainder of the third department, from No. 7 to No. 10, and a communication was made to the council by Mr. Bowen, the superintendent, recommending that this department be placed upon a permanent basis, by providing a suitable lot and building aside from the other schools. It was during that year that the people of this



city were called upon to decide at the ballot-box upon the free school law of this State; and at that day, singular as it may seem, three of the citizens of Buffalo voted against giving the children of the Empire State the blessings of a free common school education.

In 1850, H. K. Viele, Esq., the superintendent, in his report, said: "The time that has been anticipated by my predecessors, when it would be necessary to erect a separate building for the accommodation of this department, has arrived. The alternative of abandoning this department is out of the question. No person that has been connected with the schools, or is at all familiar with the relative operation of the second departments and the central school, would entertain the idea for one moment."

In 1851, O. G. Steele, Esq., who was superintendent for the second time, in his annual report for that year, said: "The only course which seems practicable is to adopt the recommendations of the several superintendents, and proceed at once to the purchasing of a lot and the building of a house to be occupied by a central high school, so situated as to be accessible from all parts of the city."

In the report of the following year, the Hon. V. M. Rice said of this school: "I recommend that the third department, which now supplies, in part, the necessity of a central school, be divided into grades, according to the acquirements of the pupils; that a course of study be determined upon, which, when accomplished, shall entitle the young lad or miss to a diploma, signed by the principal teacher and such officers as the common council in their wisdom may direct. It is believed, from examples in other institutions of learning, and from the nature of mind, that this would stimulate exertion in that department, and that many would be induced to finish the course of study, who will otherwise stop short of such a result."

In the year 1853, the common council appropriated the sum of \$31,000 for the purchase of the lot and building known as the Burt property, the site of the present central school. This measure was violently opposed by many of our citizens, but through the influence and the intelligence of a bare majority of the council, a resolution was passed authorizing the mayor to issue the bonds of the city for the purchase of the property. As soon as the resolution passed the council, the anti-free school men of the city determined to enjoin the city government from issuing these bonds. Thanks to the Hon. Eli Cook, who was then mayor, for he waited patiently for the bonds to be filled out, and at one o'clock the next morning he affixed his signature and the seal of the city to that instrument.\* The resolution was obeyed, and the central school became

\* Section 9 of title 12 of the charter of the city of Buffalo, passed April 13, 1853, provided that section 8 of that act should take effect on the first day of January, 1854. Under the charter as thus passed, the common council of 1853 could not have purchased the Burt property for the central school. But by reference to chapter 636 of the Laws of 1853, it will be seen that an amendment was enacted July 21, 1853, which gave the common coun-

one of the fixed institutions of Buffalo. This was a joyous day for the friends of that school. They had labored long and faithfully, amid dark clouds and storms, and at length they were permitted to see their fondest hopes realized. And thanks to that noble band of true and tried friends of popular education, many of them are to-day living and are present with us, and God grant that their lives may be spared for many years to witness more fully the fruits of their arduous and protracted labors. In the summer of 1854, this school was removed from its former location in public school house No. 10 to its present site; and although it labored under many inconveniences on account of the arrangement of the building, still it was in a prosperous condition, and its earnest friends were looking forward to the time when it should be made all that they desired.

The superintendent for the year 1854, E. F. Cook, Esq., in his annual report, said of that school:—

“Standing at the head of our magnificent system of public instruction, forming, as it were, the keystone of the arch, it should be placed in a condition to fulfill, to the greatest extent, the object of its organization. For this purpose, I recommend the adoption of a thorough course of study, at the completion of which the student should be entitled to a diploma.” In the following report the next year, he said of it: “This school now occupies the position for which it was originally intended. It has a *local habitation* and a *name*.

In the superintendent's report of the next year (Jos. Warren, Esq.,) we find that gentleman using the following language, in speaking of that school:

“Many improvements have also been made in the internal arrangements of the school, and its plan of instruction.

“Prominent among these is the introduction of a regular course of study, to which the pupils of the school are required to conform.” \* \* \*

It will be seen, by reference to the course of study for the school, that the studies prescribed for the first division are merely the indispensable English branches authorized to be taught in the district schools, with text-books of a higher grade in most of the studies, and the addition of physiology, which is extensively adopted as a common school study in many parts of the country. Thoroughness in these fundamental studies is not only important as the basis of solid attainments in the higher branches, but the limited time a majority of the pupils remain in school renders it important that their education shall be so conducted that it

oil of that year the authority by which the aforesaid property was purchased. I make this note, because it was through the influence of Hon. A. L. Baker, then chairman of the school committee of the common council, and to Hon. A. M. Clapp, who was then a member of the assembly, that the necessary power was secured. And it is but just to add, without detracting from the earnest co-operation of the Hon. Eli Cook, that to Judge Baker, more than to any other one of the many friends of the free school system, are the people of Buffalo indebted for the purchase of that central and beautiful site, and the permanent establishment of the central school.

V. M. R.

will be complete in itself, at whatever stage in the course it may stop. It is believed that any competent judge will admit that pupils who complete the studies of the first division in this school will possess a superior common school education; that those who complete the studies of the first and second divisions will have a fair higher school education; and those completing the entire course a good academic education. It is believed that the course nowhere makes the mistake of attempting to build a chimney by commencing at the top.

The course of study was introduced at the beginning of the second term of the year, and it has been closely adhered to, with satisfactory results. It secures steadiness and continuity of effort in every branch of study until it is completed, and stimulates activity by the ambition which is felt on the part of the pupils to rise, in regular gradation, to a higher rank in the school.

Another change, to which importance is attached, is a stricter examination of candidates for admission from the other schools. This was deemed important, both as respects the character of the school, and as a matter of economy to the city. As the expense of education per scholar is greater in the central than in some of the district schools, it was felt that scholars ought not to be promoted so long as their proficiency is not superior to that of the average of the highest classes in the latter. While nothing could be more subversive of economy, or more adverse to the settled policy of the school department, than frittering away the time of the principals of the schools in instructing small special classes of advanced scholars, there is no propriety, on the other hand, in promoting scholars to the central school so long as they can be taught in the district schools, without forming them into small classes by themselves to monopolize the time of the principal teachers. The entrance examination to the central school has therefore been made so rigorous as to render admission an evidence of merit, and prevent the school being filled up with scholars who can be instructed with advantage in their respective districts."

In the report for 1860, Sanford B. Hunt, M. D., who was then superintendent of schools, said of the central school:

"Among the non-tax-paying classes, the benefit of a central school is quite as apparent. It calls in and educates the brighter and more scholarly children, lifts them up to the level of refinement and the ambitions of noble natures, and so diffuses the wealth of knowledge among those otherwise poor. And the presence of the children of the poor in the central school, intermingled as they are there with the more fortunate sons and daughters of the rich, teaching republican equality to these, and gathering refinement themselves, pleads powerfully for the maintenance of an institution noble in itself, and dedicated to noble purposes."

Through the influence of Joseph Warren, Esq., this school has been placed under the direction of the Regents of the University of the State,



he having, during the last year of his administration, drafted a bill to that effect, and sent it to the Legislature. This bill was presented by Senator Wadsworth, but, it being late in the session, no action was taken upon it until the next year, when the bill became a law, thereby allowing this school to participate in the literature fund of the State, equally with and on the same footing with the academies and high schools of the State; also allowing it to participate annually in all appropriations which shall be made to teachers' classes in academies, and to the same extent and upon the same terms and conditions as academies selected, or which shall be selected by the Board of Regents of the University, for the instruction of teachers' classes.\* This school has been visited by four of the Regents, viz: Hon. Millard Fillmore, Judge Hall, Dr. Luckey, and Secretary Woolworth, who expressed themselves highly pleased with its condition and management.

I have thus far endeavored to present to you a brief sketch of the labors of the friends of the central school, and in order that its enemies shall have no occasion to say that they have been slighted, I will give you a short history of their herculean efforts to destroy this most excellent institution. On the 31st day of January, 1859, Alderman Howard, who was then a member of the common council, offered the following resolution:

*"Resolved, That the central school be abolished at the present time unless the city be now under unexpired contracts for teachers therein, and if there are any such unexpired contracts, that the said school be abolished at the expiration of such contracts, and that in the meantime the superintendent of schools be directed, and he is hereby directed, not to make any contract for teachers for that school to extend beyond the time of the unexpired contracts for teachers in such school."*

This was put forth as a feeler, but after a short discussion it was withdrawn, as the common council were not at that time prepared to strike down this noble structure. The attempt was again renewed on the 28th day of the next month, by the offering of the following resolution, by Alderman Howard:

*"Resolved, That the committee on schools be instructed to inquire into the expediency of discontinuing the central school, and when it may be done without loss or damage to the city arising out of existing contracts, if any, with teachers in such school, and report."* Adopted.

I have no doubt that the committee on schools did inquire into the expediency of discontinuing the central school, and I am convinced that they became satisfied that, to use the language of the resolution, it could not be done without loss or damage to the city, and consequently took no action upon the subject.

Intent upon its destruction, its enemies lost no opportunity of attacking it through the common council, and on the 5th day of December,

\* This school was authorized to participate in the Literature Fund by an amendment of the city charter, as will be seen by reference to section 12, chapter 272, Laws of 1861.



1859, their representative, Alderman Howard, in his seat in the common council, moved to amend the majority report, relative to teachers' salaries, by adding the following:

"That the superintendent of schools is hereby instructed not to employ any teacher in the central school after the expiration of the present school term."

The chairman decided the question not in order. Alderman Howard appealed from the decision of the chair. The decision was sustained by a vote of 15 ayes to 8 noes. Again the enemies of the school were defeated, and it was necessary to bring an outside pressure upon the feebler ones in the council.

Accordingly, a petition from Mr. Eli B. Smith and others, praying for the abolishment of that school, was presented to the council on the 19th of December. This petition was referred to the committee on schools, but its opponents were unwilling to wait the action of the committee, and on the 31st day of December, Ald. Howard offered the following:

*"Resolved, That it is expedient to discontinue the central school."*

This was also referred to the same committee, and on the 9th day of January, 1860, the committee reported in favor of the discontinuance of that school, and the establishment, in its stead, of a branch of the State Normal school, which should take the place of it, and fulfill the same office. This report was laid on the table for one week, and, when called up, a resolution was adopted directing the common council to petition the State Legislature to establish a branch of the State Normal school in its place, creating in it a department to which a limited number of advanced pupils of the public schools of Buffalo should be admitted, on terms similar to those then in force in the central school. This resolution also conveyed to the State the entire central school property, except 62½ feet of the lot fronting on Court street, and running through to Genesee street on the west side of Franklin street. In addition to the above, and in order to place it beyond all hope of recovery, Ald. Howard offered the following resolution:

*"Resolved, That the superintendent of schools be instructed not to employ any teacher for the central school until the further order of this council."*

This was likewise referred to the school committee, but they failed to report on it, and the Legislature of the State, thinking it impolitic to assist in its destruction, allowed the central school to stand as a lasting monument to its originators.

I have thus imperfectly sketched the history of this school. Many points have been omitted for want of time, but enough has been said, I trust, to show that this school was established after many years of hard labor on the part of its founders, and that the vigilance of its friends has at various times saved it from being destroyed. The question as to whether "this school shall be maintained" was settled long ago, and no ruthless hand will again be raised to injure an institution dear to the

hearts of the youth of our city, and one of which our citizens delight to boast.

In the year 1838 there were in the city but seven small schools, with but one teacher each ; while at the present time there are 35 schools, and 220 teachers employed. As our schools have become larger they have also become better classified, and as good order is now observed in all of them they are more efficient.

Of the 220 teachers in the employ of this department 30 are males and 190 females.

Below I give the salaries, as fixed by the common council, for the year 1863 :

Principal of Central School.....	\$1,125
Assistant Principals of Central Schools.....	900
Female Principal Central School.....	560
Principal Commercial Department Central School.....	900
Teacher of French, Central School.....	450
Teacher of German, " .....	450
Female assistants, " .....	365
Male Principals of Graded Schools.....	900
Teacher of Vocal Music .....	900
Teacher of Penmanship .....	900
Principals of Departments in Graded Schools.....	365
Principals of Nos. 27 and 28.....	450
Principal of No. 30.....	365
Principal of No. 9 (colored school).....	500
Principals of schools of one department, except Nos. 27, 28 and 30,	300
Assistants in departments of Graded Schools.....	275
Principal of St. Vincent Orphan Asylum.....	365
Assistant in St. Vincent " .....	275

Provided, however, that when new and inexperienced teachers are appointed they shall receive a salary of \$200 for the first year, which salary shall be increased \$25 each year until it shall reach the maximum salary paid assistants.

When we compare the above salaries with the high prices of everything necessary to the support of the teacher, it is evident that the teachers of Buffalo are but poorly paid for the valuable services rendered ; but I hope and believe that our city authorities will, during the coming year, fix these salaries at higher rates, and in order that the teachers of our children may have enough to live respectably, at least, if they refuse them anything for a "rainy day."

I have succeeded in raising the standard of qualifications of teachers, but think it is yet too low, and hope to make a still further successful attempt during the next year.

I regard the examination of candidates as one of the most important duties of a superintendent or commissioner, and think great caution

should be observed, in order that no teacher's license should be conferred except upon such candidates as are eminently qualified to teach.

On entering upon the discharge of the duties of this office in January last, my first work was to reorganize the teachers' institute which had been previously suspended.

All the teachers of the city schools are required to assemble at the central school building on the first Saturday of each month. After the usual opening exercises, the superintendent has an opportunity to make any suggestions he may deem proper for the management and successful operations of the public schools of the city; after which, essays and reports on subjects pertaining to the teacher's profession are read and discussed. The half day is profitably spent in this manner.

In addition to these monthly meetings, all teachers of the public schools of the city, who have not been engaged in the same as teachers for more than two years, are required to meet on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month, and attend cheerfully and faithfully to the instructions and suggestions of such teachers as may have been appointed to conduct the exercises. During most of this session the exercises are conducted, in classes of suitable size, by some of the male principals of schools.

Various plans have been tried here for conducting an institute, but I think the above the most efficient and the most satisfactory to all.

The entire general fund expenses (as estimated by the comptroller) of the school department of this city, for the year 1862, amounts to \$84,307.00. This money has been expended as follows :

Paid for teachers' salaries .....	\$73,400 00
Salary of superintendent.....	1,200 00
One thousand cords of wood, and sawing.....	4,000 00
Sweeping and cleaning.....	1,750 00
Ordinary repairs and maintenance.....	2,000 00
Insurance central school.....	37 50
Vine street insurance.....	19 50
Printing, stationery and contingencies.....	1,000 00
For interest on orders.....	600 00
Interest on orders of 1861, on account of deficiency in estimate .....	300 00
	<hr/>
	\$84,307 00
Less amount received from State.....	25,502 04
	<hr/>
	\$58,804 96
	<hr/>

This is an increase over the expenses of last year of nearly \$3,000; but our citizens do not grumble at the expenses of their school system, for they believe it to be a wiser economy to build school houses than jails and penitentiaries, and cheaper to educate a boy in school than in prison.



The duties of superintendent of schools of Buffalo are more arduous than in cities where a board of education has been created. Here the superintendent is required to examine and contract with the teachers, visit schools and examine classes, attend to all complaints of parents against teachers, and of teachers against parents and pupils, examine all pupils who seek admission to the central school, purchase fuel and attend to housing the same, attend to all repairs of old school houses and the building and furnishing of new ones, make an annual report to the common council of the condition of the city schools; all this in addition to his office duties, in which he has no clerk to assist him. In fact, the common council furnish him with the necessary money to carry on the schools, and he must do, aside from this, all there is to be done for the public schools of a city of nearly 100,000 inhabitants.

And here permit me to acknowledge my many obligations to the worthy corps of teachers connected with this department, for their many acts of kindness, and the valuable assistance they have rendered me during the year. It is to them that the credit of our schools is due. They are faithful, and their work is always well done.

In addition to my other labors, I have during the year made some 200 calls and visits to our public schools—a few of these were made in company with other officers of the city government, and some in company of the patrons of the schools. Having been a teacher for many years, I find it quite difficult to spend even an hour in the school room without teaching. I have accordingly taken part in hearing the class recitations, and by the interest manifested on the part of the principal and myself, I trust that many a drowsy pupil has been aroused from that slumber that has long crept o'er him, and now sees his way more clearly up the hill of science. I have also labored to make these visits interesting to teachers and pupils, by taking part in the general exercises of the school room, and by communicating, as I had opportunity, such information as twenty years experience may have suggested, always spending a short time in attempting to impress upon the minds of parents, whenever I had the pleasure of meeting them in their schools, the importance of sending their children more regularly to school, and the beneficial results of their frequent visits.

I cannot conclude this report without acknowledging my gratitude to his honor Mayor Fargo, and the other officers of the city government, for the deep interest they have taken during the year which is about to close, in the success of the public schools of this city. I am under many obligations to them and to the common council for their valuable assistance and kind advice in the discharge of my duties.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN B. SACKETT,

*Superintendent of Schools for the city of Buffalo.*



## ALBANY COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Public Instruction* :

Sir—In compliance with the request made in your circular of Aug. 27, I submit the following report :

The attendance at school is about one-half the number of children within the school age. Rate-bills affect this attendance but little, and the sentiment of the people in regard to them is, that they constitute the best method as yet brought to their knowledge for the payment of teachers' wages.

The idea that a school house should be as comfortable and inviting as a private dwelling is fast gaining ground in my district ; and we have now nine first class houses, built in accordance with the improved methods of architecture without, and conveniently arranged within, to wit : short desks, two pupils only sitting together, comfortable seats, ink wells in the desk, high ceilings, and ventilators which may be opened or closed at pleasure, and warmed by coal stoves. Globes, outline maps (Pelton's mostly,) county map, and Emmons' astronomical chart, can be found in three-fourths of the schools. Blackboards are found in every school, except three of the modern houses, which are amply supplied with first class wall-slates.

In addition to the common school studies, book-keeping is taught in three of the schools, and algebra in three ; and, as the majority of the pupils enter school at the age of six and leave at the age of fourteen, many of whom receive their entire schooling at the district school, it becomes necessary that thorough and practical teachers, in the branches named, should be employed.

Eighty-nine different teachers have been employed in the forty-five districts within my jurisdiction the past year; forty-nine of whom were females ; fifty-six of this number devote themselves wholly to the profession, while the remainder usually teach from four to six months, and usually quit as soon as something better presents itself.

The average wages, including board, is fourteen and a half dollars a month. Two-thirds of these teachers are generally found in attendance at the meetings of the associations and institutes. In fact, all who make teaching a permanent business are found at these gatherings—and greatly to their advantage. For I find that where teachers make use of these means of improvement they readily obtain from three to six dollars a month more than those who, in their own estimation, have all the wisdom and knowledge necessary to answer their purposes as temporary guides of youth, who carefully avoid all places where their ignorance may be remedied, or where their deficiencies may be exposed.

In examining candidates for licenses, I generally review the study of arithmetic, looking at the different rules somewhat after the order laid down in the books—sometimes requiring written, but oftener oral answers. The study of geography is dealt with in a very similar manner.

In grammar many are found deficient, and fail oftentimes in answering, since we pursue Clark's method, and many taught from Brown and Kirkham's are at a loss, when called upon, to commence where Prof. Clark does at the beginning.

Twelve Normal graduates have been employed the past year, and they have met with good success. As evidence of which, I would state that eight of the larger schools are taught during the winter term by females (graduates,) and the demand for their services is increasing.

There are in my district no academies, parochial schools, or schools for colored children, and but one private school. The average attendance for the past three years has been about forty. There are two union free school districts organized under the law of 1853, located near the city of Albany, in the town of Bethlehem.

The district school libraries are of little value. One-third of the districts have but one trustee, and the changes from three to one are becoming more frequent.

In eight of the schools only have I found the books of record and registry required by the law, although it is a matter to which I have frequently and earnestly called the attention of trustees.

The teachers' institute in this county has just closed its session of ten days. It has been, by far, the most successful ever held in the county, and we trust its good results will be evident in the next year's teaching.

Prof. James Cruikshank, LL. D., conducted the literary exercises of the institutes, and we were able to place before our teachers a far greater amount of lecturing ability than heretofore, to wit:

Rev. J. W. Peck, "Hand and Brain."

Rev. A. D. Mayo, "The Cultivated American."

Hon. E. W. Keyes, "Life in Education and Education in Life."

Dr. Thomas Helme, "Relation of the Common School to the Civil Government."

Nearly two hundred teachers were in attendance, and the public interest manifested exceeded our most sanguine expectations.

Respectfully submitted.

L. CARTER TUTTLE.

## SECOND DISTRICT.

RENSSELAERVILLE, Dec. 27, '62.

Hon. V. M. RICE :

Dear Sir—About three-fourths of the persons of school age are found in the schools. I am not prepared to say that the rate-bill has any particular effect in regard to the attendance upon the schools; but I do think that it has a tendency to keep the schools supplied with poor, inefficient teachers. There are a few good school houses in my district, but by far the greater portion of them are poor, miserable excuses for school

houses; with long, old-fashioned desks and benches around the outside of the room, and no ventilation other than what the doors and windows supply. The greater part of them are furnished with blackboards, and some few have outline maps.

The certificates granted to teachers have been for the most part good. We have had but one Normal graduate, whose success has been the best of any of the teachers in my district.

There is one academy in my district, (the Rensselaerville academy,) which has about thirty students in attendance, whose ages average about fifteen; it is a two story building, old and out of repair; one room has been so fitted up that it is quite comfortable. It has a small library and a limited supply of chemical and philosophical apparatus, but this is mostly broken and out of repair. The studies generally pursued in it are reading, spelling, arithmetic, algebra, chemistry, philosophy, history, geography and geometry.

There are at present only three private schools—a great decrease compared with former years.

No attention is paid to the district libraries. The general character of books is worthless, and they are held by the people in small estimation.

TRUSTEES.—The people are mostly in favor of three; where they have tried one they prefer one to three. About one-fifth of the districts have one trustee.

About one district in ten have complied with the requirements of the Code in regard to teachers' list.

The text books principally in use are Sanders' Readers, Davies' and Thomson's Arithmetics, Brown's Grammar, Comstock's Philosophy, and Day and Thomson's Algebra; the branches of study usually pursued are spelling, reading, writing, grammar, and arithmetic; the pupils usually enter school at five or six years of age, and leave at about eighteen; they attend school from four to six months in a year for eight or ten years.

The proportion of male and female teachers is about four males to five females; and of those who make it a permanent employment, perhaps one in twenty—and they follow teaching for three or four terms of four or five months. The wages for summer schools, I should think, would average about \$8 per month—the winter about \$13.

The institutes have not usually been attended by a large proportion of the teachers—not more than one in five have usually attended. At the session just held about nine-tenths of them were present. I subject them to a thorough examination, both oral and written, in spelling, reading, writing, geography, grammar, and arithmetic, and find them best qualified in arithmetic and least in grammar; about one in twenty have studied some work on the theory and practice of teaching.

The last session of the institute was held ten days, James Cruikshank,



of Albany, instructor. Instruction was given in spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic (mental and written,) physical geography, grammatical analysis, map drawing, and object teaching.

Several lectures were given by him on the various topics pertaining to the teachers' duties, and one by Rev. A. W. Peck, Rensselaerville. Subject—"Hand and Brain;" Rev. A. D. Mayo, of Albany, on the "The Cultivated American;" Hon. E. W. Keyes, deputy superintendent, on "Life in Education and Education in Life;" Commissioner Tuttle on "National Education;" Commissioner Bouton on "Education;" Commissioner Helme, "Teachers' Influence on Individual and National Character." About 190 teachers were in attendance. The public interest was much better than heretofore.

I aim to visit schools at least twice a year; have no other business, and devote my time to the cause.

GEORGE L. BOUTON.

### THIRD DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*:

I herewith send you the report upon the various topics embraced in the circular from your Department.

The attendance of persons of school age varies in different school districts; in some localities there is a pretty general attendance of all the children of a suitable age, while in others the attendance is mostly from the smaller children—the larger ones being kept at home to work—and in most of the schools the attendance is irregular, to the great disadvantage of all concerned.

In some schools the rate-bills have undoubtedly a tendency to keep some few people from sending their children to school, but, as a general rule, the people do not regard the payment of teachers' wages a hardship.

Some of the school houses are supplied with the most improved furniture and school apparatus, and have neat and well finished out-buildings. These schools are generally taught by teachers of high qualifications, and are in a flourishing condition. The children's bearing and deportment seem to partake of the neatness which surrounds them. Their lessons are better recited; their conduct and demeanor indicate refinement and good manners; proving conclusively that money spent in building neat and comfortable school houses is doubly repaid by the greater progress of the children. We have also a few old and dilapidated buildings—out-houses torn down or falling—where it seems as if the people think that any sort of a building will do for a school house; but those districts are obliged to employ teachers who are not so well qualified. Those of higher qualifications could not be induced to teach in such school houses; and the children attending such schools seem to partake of the disorder which surrounds them. I am happy to say, however, that we have but few of the latter.



The text books are of a great variety, embracing almost every author. The studies usually taught in the schools are reading, spelling, arithmetic, geography and grammar, and in a few schools philosophy and algebra are also taught.

The ages of children attending school are from five to fifteen years, although the majority of the children are under six years of age.

A general interest in the cause of education has had much to do in advancing our common schools. The question of dollars and cents in regard to teachers' wages seems to be slowly passing away, and the chief inquiry now is for capable and well qualified teachers.

Our schools would be very much benefited if some uniform system of text books were used throughout the schools.

The number of female teachers is much larger than that of males, and most of the males employed in the schools are teaching as a temporary employment. By inquiry, I find that most of the teachers do not follow teaching more than from three to six months during the year, and from three to six years—the males teaching for the most part in winter and the females in summer. The wages in summer vary from ten dollars to fifteen, in winter from fifteen to thirty.

Those who follow teaching as a permanent employment pretty generally attend the institute and association, while those who only teach as a temporary employment avoid the institute if they can.

The examination of teachers is close in orthography, reading, arithmetic—mental and written—grammar, geography, natural science, civil government, and the art of teaching. Two-thirds of the teachers licensed by me have second grade licenses, the remaining third have first grade. As a general rule, I find the most of those teaching better prepared to teach reading and arithmetic than they are the other branches.

The majority of our best teachers take the "New York Teacher," a journal containing much valuable information for our teachers; and if all would avail themselves of its lessons, much good would result from its influence upon our common schools.

The supply of teachers of high qualifications is hardly sufficient to answer the demand.

The number of Normal school graduates teaching in this district is nine, and of undergraduates fifteen. The most of them manifest a lively interest and zeal for improvement, and the demand for their services is daily increasing.

The number of private schools is eighteen—a decrease of two from last year; number of pupils attending the same is one thousand three hundred and fourteen.

There is but one union free school in this district, (the Green Island school.)

The school libraries generally are in a bad condition; the books are of almost every description, including biography, history and romance. The people think that it is a useless expenditure of money, and that

the district does not receive the amount of benefit that it would from the application of the money to teachers wages, or to the purchase of school apparatus.

The families are, pretty generally, supplied with either libraries, newspapers or periodicals.

The school districts seem to be coming back to the old system of three trustees.

The visitation of schools is one great part of our duties. While it becomes our duty to visit all the schools, some require more examination and closer attention than others. In some there is little chance for introducing new modes of instruction, though many require it, and frequently new incentives can be offered to both pupils and teachers.

Among the many applications made to me for forming new districts, I have found but one in which I considered it necessary to interfere; but slight changes sometimes are necessary for the benefit of districts.

One source of annoyance is the dilatory manner in which trustees keep back their school report, which often delays us in our reports to your Department.

In an office like ours it is almost impossible to set forth the whole of our labors, so as to give a complete notion of our duties.

THOS. HELME,

*Commissioner 3d Dist., Albany Co.*

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## ALLEGANY COUNTY—SECOND DISTRICT.

The southern district of Allegany county embraces fifteen townships. The country is comparatively new. Although the inhabitants are of the most enterprising class, yet the common school receives too little attention. It was a pine country, and "*lumber*" has the preference to "*learning*."

OUR SCHOOL HOUSES were built when boards were cheap, but builders and architects were scarce. The consequence is that our school houses exhibit more strength and durability than taste. So of all buildings here in those days. More recently, however, great improvement is manifest in dwellings and farm buildings, while the same old school house still endures to "mar the whole prospect." In most districts good houses could be readily procured, if the old ones were out of the way. There are but two log school houses in my district. There is also one very poor stone house. Very few are ventilated, save that by decay there are many passages for the keen breath of winter.

LOCATION.—Our school houses are mostly in the street. Only nine are inclosed at all, and those very poorly. There is not one that will compare favorably with those I saw this fall in Central New York. A few have each a small wood-house; less than half have any outbuildings; but four have any shade or ornamental trees, save when they stand in

the forest; most of them have more or less blackboard; about one-half have had some maps and charts—used, however, chiefly as sun shades. Nearly two-thirds have a dictionary; seven have globes; I find clocks in five; playgrounds are mostly in the street. *Such are our seminaries*, yet I am not discouraged; there are better days in prospect.

TEACHERS.—We have many honest, earnest, capable teachers; they have our gratitude; their memory shall be cherished; we wish we had more; we have *too many* who teach for only a term or two, and that *chiefly for pay*. Only the few can be induced to attend the institute, purchase, or even *read* a book like Page's, Holbrook's or Northend's, &c. They teach the art, but not the science, of written arithmetic and reading better than any other branches; they are generally fair penmen; they teach grammar, after the old style, tolerably well; neglect mental arithmetic, history, and the geography of our own country; most deficient in arithmetic as a science, they neither ask why nor teach their scholars to ask. I trust, however, we are working a *slow* reform in this direction.

The average wages is about twelve dollars in summer, and sixteen in winter. Teachers almost uniformly "board around." I have granted but seven licenses of the first, and twenty-eight of the second grade. I have granted but few local licenses. I find my standard of qualifications much higher than in surrounding districts, but still, as I judge, too low. Teachers must not only *know*, but be able to *tell*.

The attendance is less than the *abstract* indicates. Trustees do not seem to understand that item of their report. Those scholars who attend both summer and winter are liable to be twice counted. For the same reason, the proportion attending less than two months is too large. There are more scholars under five years of age than there are over fifteen. Less than one-half of those between four and twenty-one attend school at all; for this there are all kinds of poor excuses. We have no statistics of the number of scholars between four and twenty-one attending academies from this district; perhaps about two hundred. We have two union free schools, viz: No. 1, Wirt, and No. 1, Wellsville; the first is so only on paper; it is Richburgh academy and the district school in the same building and under the same trustees; there is no grading—no connection between the two. No. 1, Wellsville, is now under the direction of Prof. Lewis, a very thorough, capable and enterprising man; it is a *model school*. We have four academies, viz: Alfred university, Spring Mills (in the town of Independence), Friendship, and Richburgh; they have at present 230, 19, 47, and 9 students, respectively.

Teachers' classes in these seminaries are sometimes well conducted. I have reason to believe that *sometimes* the class *roll* is filled with names of such as cannot pay their tuition, while the class, as such, never meets. I might say more, but forbear.

The school libraries are in a deplorable condition; I have taken great pains to find them and examine the books; there is usually no place for them, and it is with difficulty that I can find them; piled away in old



boxes up stairs, under the bed, in the old brick oven, &c., &c. The trustees report 275 books, because the last trustees before them did so. Many of the books are very bad books, immoral, and sometimes obscene; the lives of noted and successful pirates and robbers, &c., &c. Many of the books are improper on account of their sectarian tendencies; agents for the publications of some sect introduce their books under the guise of biography, &c., and thus impose upon the ignorance of the trustee. There is no such amount of money paid out for books as the reports show; they pay it to teachers, and then ignorantly, they say, report it as if paid for books. These are but a few of the abuses. If the present library system is to be continued, I do most earnestly, and yet modestly, request that the trustees be required to inspect the books annually, report their entire list to the commissioner (once at least), and then annually report the books purchased; and that the commissioner be required to keep the list, and add to it from year to year, &c.

I only suggest, and would not dictate, but I feel very desirous of a reform in this matter.

Those districts which have tried *one trustee* are mostly going back to the old number.

All of which is most respectfully submitted.

HENRY L. JONES.

Wellsville, Dec. 3d, 1862.

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### BROOME COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Pub. Instr., State of N. Y.*

In accordance with your request, I hereby transmit to you my annual report on public instruction within my official jurisdiction. Although the interest manifested in behalf of common schools in Broome Co. is not what could be desired, the co-operation I have received from school officers and patrons of schools is highly gratifying, and renders my labors cheerful and pleasant.

The number of pupils in the first district of Broome county, of school age, is about six thousand; of these 4,500 have been in attendance on the means of public instruction during the past year, some three hundred attending private or parochial schools, leaving a large margin for non-attendance. Many of them, however, are from the rural section, and are engaged in manual labor after they arrive at the age of 15 or 16 years. The cases are rare in which children are detained from school by reason of rate-bills; but in some districts, trustees endeavor to conduct their schools on a basis that will enable them to defray the expenses with the fund appropriated by the State. I observe in such districts the attendance is more irregular, and the per centage of non-attendance is greater than in those districts where a large rate-bill is incurred. Men appear to appreciate that for which they give an equivalent; and those districts



accustomed to pay a rate-bill have a much higher interest in their common school, and are quicker to discover and remedy errors in the management of schools, than those unaccustomed to tax themselves. A disposition to find low salaried teachers (more properly school *keepers*) is evidently waning, while a determination to obtain the services of *competent* instructors is gaining favor quite as rapidly as could be expected in times like the present.

**SCHOOL HOUSES.**—There are 111 school buildings in this district, many of them neat, commodious structures, well fenced and properly shaded; but these are of modern date. Others there are, monuments of our hardy pioneers (nearly) fifty years ago, and reminders of present penuriousness. This latter class, I am happy to know, is gradually disappearing. The last log-hovel has been removed, and a cozy, white building, with green blinds, has been erected on the ground within the past year. The old logs lie piled a few feet from the new building, mementoes of that cherished spot where our mothers and grandmothers, clad in their homespun frocks, read their *significant* lesson of A, B, C from the school ma'am's penknife. Preparation is being made to erect several new buildings the coming year.

I have endeavored to impress on the minds of the trustees the necessity of school apparatus in the school room, and have been amply repaid by seeing many globes, numeral frames, and several sets of outline maps covering the gray wall, and on exhibition to the classes on my next visit. Some law authorizing trustees to procure necessary apparatus to an amount not exceeding ten dollars in any one year, and to levy a tax on the district for the same, as in case of repairs, &c., it appears to my mind, would be a wise legislation; that would remedy this want in most of the schools. A prevalent evil to our school interest, and difficult to obviate in this day of book speculation, is the variety of authors represented by their text-books in the same school. The teachers at our associations have endeavored to establish a uniformity by adopting certain works as standard for the county, but many influences conspire to defeat this end. Grammar, arithmetic, geography, reading, writing, and spelling, receive the principal attention. Algebra, physiology, philosophy, and botany, are taught in a few schools. Pupils often begin their attendance at too early an age for their physical, and hence their mental good—often at the age of four years when six would be better. The time well improved, under the charge of faithful teachers till they arrive at the age of fourteen or sixteen years (when most cease to attend common school,) should enable them to acquire a better education than is obtained by the average grade of our pupils.

**TEACHERS.**—During the past year 211 teachers were employed—51 being males, and 157 females. Of these two were holding State certificates, thirteen first grade, one hundred and eighty-four second, and twelve third grade certificates. The average time taught by each was three months and seven days; the average time school was taught in

each district was six months and seven days. The average pay per month, beside board, was \$14—the average pay of males being about \$20 per month ; that of female teachers \$12 per month.

Of the teachers employed, 150 attended the teachers' institute and association, and exhibit the good fruit thereof by their successful labors in the school room. They were mainly examined at public examinations, conducted chiefly by writing, experience having taught that to be the more equitable to all, and the surer test of their several attainments. At my first examinations, many nearly failed in orthography, but the fall drills show a great improvement, and I have reason to expect that the instruction and exercises of Prof. C. W. Sanders, at our last institute, will revive a new interest in orthography and elocution. I believe that the teachers generally see the need of a more thorough qualification; and the zeal for improvement manifested gives promise of a higher standard of education. The people are beginning to appreciate the common schools, and wherever they are well sustained, private schools and academies receive a meagre support.

ACADEMIES.—The academy located at Windsor is an ample, commodious building, pleasantly located, with an excellent library. The teachers are competent to impart instruction in the grade of studies usually pursued in first class academies; still the attendance for some time past has been only from 15 to 28 pupils per term. The teachers' class, or teachers admitted as members of that class, has received far too little attention to result in much practical benefit. Although the rate of tuition appropriated by the State for that purpose is double that established by the principal of the academy for the same course of study, they receive no more attention or instruction during the term. Applicants for the class are consequently limited, and mere boys are sometimes admitted to fill the class, while teachers, needing the instruction intended by the appropriation, attend elsewhere, and defray their own expenses. With proper management, such a class, in the first district of Broome county, may be productive of great good to the cause of education through our common schools.

The parochial school at Harpersville is chiefly sustained by the Episcopalian society, and patrons from its immediate locality. Several teachers who have attended there, speak in high terms of the institution.

The colored children of this district are very few, and attend the same schools and recite with the same classes as the white children, exhibiting in some instances marked proficiency and good intellect.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—On assuming the duties of school commissioner, I found the district libraries generally in a dilapidated condition, piled in barrels, stored away in old garrets, eaten by mice, torn by children, and generally neglected. I have examined every library, urged upon trustees the importance of discharging their duty in caring for and sustaining a good library in every district, aided them in searching out the strayed and defaced books, and arranging them in cases pro-

vided for the purpose. In several instances I found the people anxious for reading matter, but ignorant of the existence of a library in their midst. In other districts, patrons, and even librarians, had been permitted to remove from the district carrying books with them, till the library was destroyed. This indifference to so indispensable an agency for obtaining information, was apparently caused by the penuriousness of trustees, who used the library fund for other purposes—often illegitimately—thereby saving a few cents from rate-bill or tax-list, urging as an excuse for the evil, the uselessness of a district library. A great change has, however, taken place within the past year, favorable to district libraries. Book cases have been provided, books brought from the loft, the contents of old barrels placed on clean shelves, list of books carefully prepared, and the money expended for new books, in nearly every school district. The reading interest has accordingly increased, and the people appreciate more fully the benefit derived from this source. Much remains to be done to restore the libraries to their former standing, and nothing but the direct attention of school officers to this matter can accomplish the work. The best school district library in this district is in school district No. 1, Windsor, containing 243 volumes, which are appreciated by an intelligent community. There are many good private libraries, and newspapers are well circulated among the people, but a large number of the less wealthy families are without either, and depend upon their neighbors or upon the district libraries.

The law permitting districts to choose at their annual meeting between one or three trustees was new, and had to be tested by the people. Many accepted it at once, while others cried, "away with innovations," and clung more tenaciously to the creed of their fathers. But time has shown the wisdom of one trustee, at least in lessening the difficulties and errors arising from districts having three and the districts are gradually adopting the change. The principal objection urged to one trustee, is the liability of his forgetting the interest of the school in his anxiety to furnish a situation to some intimate friend or relative as teacher.

The commissioners of Broome Co. conducted a joint institute, of twelve days, at Binghamton, which was highly gratifying, and gave promise of success. The teachers manifested by their interest in the exercises, that they attended for mutual improvement, and they would not be disappointed. It was pronounced by all to be the most interesting and best working institute they ever attended, and the largest ever held in the county. Over 100 more teachers were in attendance than there are schools in the county. Instruction was given, in the manner of presenting, objectively, the various studies taught in common schools, by Prof. N. A. Calkins, of New York, and Prof. Cruttenden, of Binghamton (late of N. Y.). Prof. J. W. Lusk, of N. Y. city, and Prof. C. W. Sanders



gave much very valuable instruction in penmanship and oratory. Their several lectures were well deserving of praise. "Schools from the Scholar Side," delivered by Rev. J. T. Pierson, of Binghamton, abounded with mirth and originality. The fruits of the institute are already manifest in the opening of the winter schools, and we hope for a new impetus to be given to the cause of education in our midst, through the earnest labors of our faithful teachers.

MISCELLANY.—It has been the aim of the commissioner to visit each school at least twice during the year. Some of them have been visited three or four times, and some, for causes beyond the control of the commissioner, have received but one visit. The number of teachers employed makes it necessary to visit at least two schools per day, to see them all during the term; and the time necessary to look to the progress and interest of the schools, and to look up and re-organize the school district libraries, often proves the days quite too short to perform that amount of labor.

Trustees are often induced to visit the schools with me, and whenever they do the influence is salutary. Some teachers I find possessing and exercising an influence to awaken a spirit of school visitation in the district, and no effort seems productive of greater good. Teachers and children are more interested, confidence is gained, parents are in direct communication with the school, and the spirit of progress is working; in fact, "the schoolmaster is abroad."

Notwithstanding the great events of the year, it is gratifying to know that the attendance at school has been more regular, and includes a greater per cent of those of school age than that in former years.

The number reported of school age is 6,036, being an increase of 31 from last year; the number in attendance 4,635, being an increase of 296 from the attendance of last year. The average attendance on days during which the schools were visited was about two-thirds those on the teachers' list. In only one school did I find every pupil present. The importance of a regular attendance should be more fully felt by the teachers, and a greater effort made to create and maintain an *interest* in the school room that shall compel attendance.

To impress on the minds of patrons, teachers and scholars the necessity of a prompt and regular attendance during the hours of school, has called for a share of my humble influence, while in the discharge of the duties of the office.

District difficulties that have been presented to me have been found trifling, but magnified by selfishness, enmity, and obstinacy. In most cases, harmony of feeling and union in sentiment and action have been restored by inciting to just and rational views, and pointing to the inconsistencies of each. The press of Broome county are entitled to our sincere thanks for the free use of their papers as a general medium of communication with teachers and school officers. The local examina-



tions held two weeks in different towns, both spring and fall, have afforded opportunities for most of the teachers to obtain their certificates, and have been by them generally improved.

Trustees have generally attended these local examinations, and been thereby better enabled to judge of the ability of those they choose to employ.

I find the duties of this office, though pleasant, no gentle recreation to be indulged in hours of leisure from more engrossing pursuits; but to be attentive to every call, vigilant in the discharge of every duty, earnest at all times, faithful in all things, demands the devotion of the highest faculties and noblest energies of the mind.

If my ambition shall make me an instrument of good in the cause of popular education, and I can see the common schools rising to that eminence their importance justly demands, I shall feel amply rewarded for all this toil.

Respectfully yours,

A. A. ROSE.

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## CATTARAUGUS COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

HON. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Public Instruction*:

The undersigned, school commissioner for the first Assembly district of Cattaraugus county, would respectfully submit the following report:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—I have no statistics based upon the attendance and non-attendance of persons of school age in this district; the brief time allowed me for that purpose, together with the pressure of other official duties, having rendered their collection impracticable. I may be permitted to say, however, in general terms, that few children are sent to school until they have arrived at the age of five or six years, while the great majority of persons who attend at any time, leave, not to return, before they have reached the age of twenty-one.

Irregular attendance is one of the many evils with which teachers have to contend, introducing confusion and disorganization into the classes, and seriously hindering that steady and uniform progress which is so desirable, and so essential to the good order and prosperity of every school.

Tardiness of attendance is another of the serious evils which call imperatively for correction; but few teachers will succeed in remedying it without that aid and co-operation from parents and patrons, which, in too many instances, they fail to receive.

The manifest effect of rate-bills in many of the districts is to diminish the attendance of pupils. In a considerable number of the schools under my supervision, and the same is doubtless true of other portions of the State, the public money is made to defray the whole expense of instruc-

tion, teachers being employed no longer than is necessary to exhaust the apportionments to the districts. So weak a sense of duty and responsibility have some parents, and so poor an appreciation of the benefits secured to them by our common school system, that, rather than pay a paltry rate-bill, they prefer to detain their children at home in ignorance, or suffer them to frequent the streets and places of low resort, to learn with fatal facility the lessons of immorality and vice, so incompatible with future usefulness and good citizenship.

The school houses, though far in advance of those of the olden time, are not what an enlightened regard for the health, comfort, and mental well-being of the pupils demands. The seats, most of which have perpendicular backs, are too high and narrow, and incline often toward the floor in front, rendering constant effort necessary in the pupils to retain their positions upon them. It is needless to say that the physical comfort so essential to close and successful study can hardly be secured on seats of this description. But for the protesting voice of charity, it would not be difficult to infer that many of the seats in our school houses were designed and constructed for inquisitorial purposes. The condition of the school houses generally might be materially improved; their sites are not always wisely chosen, and the out-buildings and furniture are, in many cases, quite inadequate to the necessities of the schools. Most, if not all the school houses are warmed by stoves. But few were originally provided with any proper means of ventilation; during my visitations, however, the upper window sashes in many of them have, at my suggestion, been dropped, so as to allow the poisonous vapors produced by respiration to escape. Most, if not all, are provided with black-boards; many with maps and charts; a few with terrestrial globes; fewer still with numeral frames; and none, to my knowledge, with cabinets of minerals or other curiosities.

The variety of text-books is too great, yet, as commissioners possess only an advisory power in the matter, and as both teachers and parents have their own preferences, it has been impracticable thus far to establish such a uniformity as ought to exist, and as is necessary to the perfect classification of pupils. Children are generally well supplied with books, though in some instances I have found a degree of destitution wholly inconsistent with an intelligent apprehension by parents of the duties which they owe to their offspring, to society, and to the State.

The branches of study most generally pursued are orthography, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and grammar; while in a considerable number of the schools, particularly in winter, algebra, natural philosophy, human physiology, astronomy, &c., are studied to some extent. The general condition of the schools is susceptible of material improvement, though it may be said with truth, if not without egotism, that a gratifying degree of progress in the right direction has been made during the present district administration.

**TEACHERS.**—The number of persons who follow teaching as a permanent employment is very small in proportion to the whole number engaged in the schools, the great majority turning their attention to other pursuits during the vacations between the summer and winter terms. At least three-fourths of all the teachers at present employed in this district are females, and should the righteous demands of the general government upon the patriotic services of our young men continue much longer, few, if any, male teachers will remain in the schools, nor should they while a single blow remains to be struck for humanity and good government. Teachers' wages in this district range in summer from \$1.25 to \$3 per week; and in winter from \$2 to \$4 per week for females, and from \$15 to \$25 per month for males.

The studies in which I examine candidates are orthography, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar, history, government, and composition as contained in their manuscript answers to questions; and for certificates of the first grade, the higher English branches taught in the most advanced common schools. The branches in which teachers are generally most deficient are orthography, reading, grammar, history and government.

A creditable number of the teachers employed in this district have read "Page's Theory and Practice of Teaching," and many, at my solicitation, have become subscribers to the "New York Teacher."

About three-fourths of all the certificates granted during the first year of my term were of the third grade, the remaining fourth being of the second grade. In later examinations candidates have acquitted themselves much more creditably. In the fall examinations just closed, about one-half of the certificates conferred were of the second grade. I have granted very few certificates of the first grade, the teachers of the district having been very generously and generally supplied with them by my predecessor just before the expiration of his official term, and, in many instances, with little reference to the merits of the recipients.

**ACADEMIES.**—There is one academy in this district, situated at Olean. I wrote to the principal in due time for the statistics of the institution to be embodied in this report, but the unusual amount of business on his hands at the time prevented a compliance with my request. I must therefore refer you to the Report of the Regents of the University for 1862, for the required information, as that report is neither in my possession nor accessible at this time.

**PRIVATE SCHOOLS**—Six private schools only, with an aggregate of 139 pupils, have been reported to me for the school year, ending on the 30th of September last, the reports exhibiting a decided decrease in the number of such schools as compared with former years. The reports may not have included every private school taught in the district during the year; but it cannot be questioned that the greater efficiency of the district schools, under the present system of supervision, has greatly



diminished the number of private schools in the State, by diminishing the demand for them.

**LIBRARIES.**—The condition of the district libraries generally is by no means satisfactory. The books composing them are of a decidedly miscellaneous character, having been selected from year to year by persons of differing tastes, and every degree of culture and refinement. The estimation in which they are held by the people is by no means so great as it formerly was. The interest excited by novelty has ceased to exist, and in many districts little attention is paid either to the books themselves or to the laws regulating their distribution and return. Whether or not the appropriations of money for library purposes ought to be continued longer, is a question for the wisdom of the Department and the Legislature to decide. In my humble opinion, the interests of the people would be consulted by adding the money heretofore set apart for library purposes to that apportioned among the districts for the payment of teachers' wages.

**TRUSTEES.**—There is a growing sentiment among the people of the district in favor of one trustee instead of three. There is little doubt that the adoption of the one trustee system throughout the State, would prevent many of the quarrels that annually arise in school districts from misunderstanding, jealousy and distrust among trustees, and save the Department from much of the annoyance now suffered from the entertainment and decision of appeals, some of which, to my certain knowledge, are prompted by a spirit of rivalry and hate. Other things being equal, one trustee will generally administer the affairs of a school district better than three, every one of whom feels but a divided responsibility, and waits for his associates to assume and bear the burdens of the office. Somewhat more than half of the school districts under my supervision, as shown by the reports, had only one trustee during the school year ending on the 30th of September.

**INSTITUTES.**—The annual institute of Cattaraugus county for 1862, was held at Ellicottville, commencing on the 15th and closing on the 26th day of September. My associate and myself were assisted during the entire session by James Cruikshank, LL. D., of Albany, editor of the *New York Teacher*. The subjects upon which instruction was given were orthography, reading, penmanship, arithmetic—mental and written—geography, with map drawing, grammar, composition, practical teaching, and miscellaneous. Lectures were given during the session by the following persons: Dr. Cruikshank, seven—subjects, Physical Geography and miscellaneous; Hon. V. M. Rice, Reading, Writing, and the Government of Schools; Rev. Dr. Aiken, The state of the Nation; Mr. John Pringle, Education; Dr. Lyman Packard, Symmetrical Development and the Proper Incentives to Study. The number of teachers in attendance was about one hundred and twenty, and the interest manifested in the exercises was good and well sustained during the whole session.



The attendance of citizens upon the exercises and lectures was highly creditable to their intelligence and zeal, and gave a gratifying proof of the enlightened concern felt by the people of the county in the cause of popular education. Suffice it to say, that the institute was one of the most interesting and profitable ever held in the county.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—The following is a brief summary of the labors performed during the last school year in the discharge of my duties. In addition to the labor of apportioning the public moneys, holding an institute, and making out my annual abstracts from the trustees' reports, many of which are about as undecipherable as the hieroglyphical inscriptions upon the Egyptian tombs, I have made two tours of the district, comprising fourteen towns, for the examination of candidates, examined a large number singly at my office, altered a considerable number of school districts, carried on an extensive correspondence, chiefly at my own expense, with persons writing for favors or information, and requesting an early answer, issued circulars, published notices, &c., &c., and visited, as will appear from my statistical report, about two hundred and fifty schools, remaining half a day in each. It will thus appear that the office of school commissioner is no sinecure, but a position calling for great and arduous services at moderate and unremunerative prices. A full and faithful discharge of all the duties it devolves, leaves little or no time for any attention to other pursuits. In accepting the position I relinquished an increasing practice in a humane and lucrative profession; but if, at the expiration of my term, I shall have succeeded in materially improving the teachers and through them the schools of the district, I shall feel amply recompensed for my labors, and shall return to my former pursuits with a sustaining consciousness of good accomplished and duty done.

LYMAN PACKARD,  
*School Commissioner.*

YORKSHIRE CENTER, *November 20, 1862.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

NAPOLI, N. Y., *December 29th, 1862.*

HON. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction :*

Sir—The undersigned, school commissioner of the second Assembly district of Cattaraugus county, respectfully submits the following report on public instruction within his official jurisdiction :

There are within my jurisdiction 139 schools and 8,471 persons of school age, giving an average of 60.8 persons of school age to each school. There were 6,736 children taught in the schools during the past year, or about four-fifths of the whole number of persons of school age. The children taught, attended school as follows :

31 per cent., less than two months.

35 do two months, and less than four.

23 per cent, four months and less than six.

8 do six do do eight.

3 do eight do do ten.

From the above it will readily be seen that one pupil in three attends school less than two months; two in three, less than four months; while only one in three attends school four months and over, and one in ten, six months and over.

In many districts (perhaps in the majority) public sentiment is against raising any money by rate-bills. As the result, the trustees hire the teacher who will teach for the least wages, and limit the school to the least time the law will allow and secure the public money. By so doing, many districts avoid rate-bills entirely, or reduce them to a very few dollars. The result of so reducing teachers' wages is, that as soon as teachers are qualified to teach a good school, they can get better wages in some other business, and so they leave the school room and seek employment elsewhere.

I am happy to state that a gradual improvement is going on in the character and condition of school houses, their sites and outbuildings. Last year there were five *log* school houses in my district; this year there are but four; while many of the old frame buildings are giving place to new and more commodious ones. Many of the sites have been enlarged, and ornamented with shade trees, while nearly all of the school houses are supplied with suitable outbuildings. The school houses are all warmed by wood stoves, and are mostly ventilated by windows. Some are supplied with ventilators at the top of the rooms. The school rooms are all supplied with blackboards; a majority of them with globes and maps; while very few have any other school apparatus.

The children are mostly well supplied with text books, but of such great varieties as very seriously to retard the progress of the school. I know of no better way to obviate it, than to have some man or set of men, either in the state or county, that shall have power to say what text books shall be used in the schools. I think that a law to the above effect would result in a great benefit to our schools.

During the past year, 305 teachers have been employed in the schools in my district, of which number 24 per cent. have been males, and 76 per cent. females. During the year previous, there were 297 teachers, of whom 30 per cent. were males, showing a very great decrease of male teachers. The decrease of male teachers will be still greater this year, as many of our best teachers have nobly volunteered to serve their country. There are not more than ten teachers in my district that follow teaching as a permanent employment; the rest merely make it a stepping-stone to something that pays better in the way of *dollars* and *dimes*. Teachers' wages vary from \$12 to \$30 per month for males, and from \$1 to \$4 per week for females. The average is about \$17 per month for

males, and \$1.50 per week for females. In almost all cases teachers have the privilege of "boarding round."

Teachers are examined in reading, writing, spelling, orthography, grammar, geography, arithmetic and history, including the news of the day as gathered from newspapers. I find teachers the best qualified in grammar, geography and arithmetic, while they are most deficient in general news. The examination is both written and oral. Not more than one-third of the teachers have read any work on the "Theory and Practice of Teaching." During the past year I have granted 206 certificates, of which 123 have been of the third grade, 73 of the second, and ten of the first.

There is a large demand for teachers of higher qualifications, but they are not to be found. There are no Normal school graduates teaching at the present time. There have been a few graduates teaching in this district, and where they have come under my observation, they have taught with a great amount of zeal, and with good success, and have had a very beneficial influence.

Randolph Academy and Ladies' Seminary is the only academic institution in this Assembly district. It has about 180 students. The number of ladies and gentlemen is about equal. The building is forty-four by eighty feet on the ground, and is three stories high above the basement. There are rooms for the accommodation of those students who wish to board themselves. It has a valuable library and an extensive chemical and philosophical apparatus. The course of study is extensive and thorough. The teachers' class, under the supervision of S. G. Love, A. M., principal, has furnished the schools with some of the best teachers in the county.

There are ten private schools, being a decrease of one from last year, with an attendance of 163 pupils.

There are no parochial schools, nor schools for colored children, within my jurisdiction.

Three union free school districts have been organized under the law of 1853. District No. 1, Persia (Gowanda); District No. 1, Ellicottville, and District No. 7, Randolph.

The district school libraries are generally kept in a very poor condition. The librarians pay little or no attention to them. The books are scattered over the districts, and many of them are lost. There are few exceptions to the above. In a few of the districts suitable arrangements have been made for the preservation of the books, and the libraries are in a good condition. The books composing the libraries are of a kind that reflects credit upon those who purchased them. In most of the libraries are valuable biographical and historical works, also interesting and instructive books for children.

Most of the families are supplied with periodicals and newspapers, while a majority have private libraries.



Most of the people prefer but one trustee. Eighty-eight of the districts have but one, while 51 have three. I think all of the trustees have complied with the requirements of "No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction."

Our teachers' institute commenced on the 15th of September, and was in session eleven days, under the charge of James Cruikshank, editor of the Teacher, who acted as instructor and lecturer. Lectures were also delivered by Dr. Packard, commissioner of first district—subject, "Education;" Rev. D. D. Aiken—subject, "The Present Crisis;" and John Pringle, of Buffalo—subject, "Education." One hundred and seventeen teachers were present. A large amount of public interest was manifested in the exercises and lectures, as the crowded rooms attested. Altogether, it was one of the best institutes we ever had.

During the sessions of the winter and summer terms of school, my time is occupied in visiting schools, while between the terms my time is occupied in the inspection of teachers, apportioning school money, making my abstract from the trustees' reports, and in taking into consideration the propriety of granting or refusing petitions in regard to the alteration of school districts.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

GEO. A. GLADDEN.

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### CAYUGA COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Public Instruction* :

In compliance with the requirement stated in the circular to school commissioners, the undersigned submits the following report :

Popular education is gaining ground among the people of this district. The attendance of teachers, parents and pupils upon educational meetings, a growing anxiety about the character and qualifications of teachers, and the manner in which they conduct the exercises of the school room, indicate progress. Still there is room for improvement. These indications may not always be substantial realities, but they are fore-shadowings of good.

COMMON SCHOOLS.—The attendance of pupils upon our common schools is far from being as large as it should be. The following aggregate will present at a glance the actual condition in this respect. Taking at random, as the schools were visited last summer, the number present at the time of visitation, the whole number on the teachers' list, and the number reported by the trustees of said districts, and we might justly infer that our school system is not appreciated. Sixteen districts, in four different towns, present the following result : Number of pupils present at the time of visit, 361 ; number of pupils on the teachers' list,



592 ; number of pupils reported by trustees, 1,087. From this statement it will be observed that the actual attendance at the time of visitation by the commissioner is only about thirty-three per cent. of the whole number reported in the district by the trustees, and but sixty-one per cent. of the whole number on the teachers' list. It will be further seen that the whole number on that list is but fifty-five per cent. of the whole number in the district between four and twenty-one, as reported by the trustees. This is a fair average of our summer schools. The winter term would show a larger per centage.

In some districts, if the school is continued so as to render a rate-bill necessary, the scholars are taken out ; but in most, the rate-bill is paid as a matter of course. The popular sentiment, so far as I have been able to learn it, is in favor of the rate-bill.

There is a decided improvement in the construction of school houses. Every new house is built in a good substantial manner, and upon scientific principles, and furnished with appropriate furniture. Nearly all are warmed by stoves, and attention is given to ventilation ; and commodious out-houses are erected. These remarks are applicable to new houses. There are a few, and but a few, which disgrace the districts in which they are respectively situated. At Sterling Centre, and in two or three other districts in the same town, and in Conquest and Cato may be found a few school houses that were built so long ago "that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary ;" and it is a shame that they are not torn down at once, and their places supplied with commodious buildings. The location of many of the school houses is not the most fortunate that could be selected. One only stands in a grave-yard,—at least, a grave-yard is fenced in, in part, by the school house,—and the highway or grave-yard is the only play ground for the pupils. Not a few stand at the forks of the road. In far too many districts little or no taste is manifested in the selection of the site, or in adorning the school premises. There are honorable exceptions, such as the school in district number six, Mentz, number three, Cato, and several others, where the public spirit of a few lovers of popular education has manifested itself by building neat fences around the school lot, and transplanting trees and shrubbery. We are happy to point to such districts as examples worthy of imitation.

APPARATUS is a desideratum in our schools. Very few have any, not even a globe, map, or chart of any kind. In many schools may be found the relics of what was once a map, or chart, and occasionally a ball with nails driven into it, and, dimly, through the dirt may be traced a geographical name, indicating it was once a globe. But even these relics are few. In fact, with a few exceptions, school apparatus has been shamefully abused, and the fault must rest not entirely upon the scholars, but teachers are, in a measure, responsible for this abuse.

TEXT BOOKS are as various as vehicles. In arithmetic, we find Col-

burn's, Thomson's, Adams', Davies', Stoddard's and Robinson's *series*. In geography, Mitchell's, Monteith's, Morse's, McNally's, Smith's, Colton and Fitch's *series*. In Grammar, Wells', Clark's, Brown's, Bullions', Covell's and Green's. In reading, Sanders', Town's, Parker and Watson's, and some other *series*. From the text-books may be inferred the branches of study pursued. Algebra, history and book-keeping are taught in about one school out of ten.

In many instances pupils commence school at too early an age. It is not unfrequent to find children of the age of three in our summer schools; and in the winter, pupils ranging from four to twenty-one years of age are under the instruction of the same teacher. The major part, however, both male and female, "*finish their education*," and graduate at the early age of eighteen. But it is believed that the whole average time of consecutive study does not exceed three years !

Our schools are below the standard erected by the Department. Although there is progress, and a marked improvement in the condition of school houses and scholastic attainments, still there are great deficiencies in methods of instruction, system, and order in the government of the schools. Our most urgent wants to remedy these evils, are good TEACHERS. There is an intimate connection between a good teacher and a good school. One is the accompaniment of the other. No matter how bad the school, place a good teacher in it, and the whole appearance is soon changed. But it is impossible to get good teachers while the views of many of our trustees remain as they are upon the subject of compensation. "We must have a cheap teacher," is the parsimonious cry of many who have control of this matter. They forget that a good school for three months is worth more than a poor one for any length of time. One of our most urgent wants, therefore, is *liberal minded trustees*, who are willing to employ good teachers, whatever the compensation required.

TEACHERS.—"If we would improve the schools, we must improve the teachers," says a friend of education. We would not speak disparagingly of those engaged in this noble calling. But truth demands a plain statement. While we admit that no class of men and women labor so hard for so small compensation, we would at the same time, for their own welfare, and for the welfare of the children committed to their care, say that the public demands better qualifications on the part of the majority of teachers. We do not mean to say that teachers fall below what they once were, but that the standard has been elevated, and they should be ready and willing to keep pace with the advancing standard. There is no reason why our ancient county of Cayuga should not constitute a part of that public which demands better teachers, neither is there any reason why her sons and daughters should not be ready to meet the demand. Although we have many good teachers, who understand their vocation practically and theoretically, yet there are more who do not thus understand it. Young persons should make a special preparation

for the business of teaching. Other professions and trades require an apprenticeship before a public demonstration is made. But few think themselves able to construct a barn without having learned the carpenter's trade; and no one to make and put together the complicated machinery of a cotton-mill without being skilled in mechanics, and having made himself acquainted with the nature and properties of the materials he is to work upon. But how many are there who think themselves capable of "molding the plastic mind of youth" even before their own minds have been molded; who assume to attune the thousand chords of human passion before their own have been harmonized; who imagine they are competent to guide the votaries of science ere they have learned the way themselves! Truly, such are blind leaders of the blind, and it is no wonder so many of them fail.

Many of our teachers have not made that special preparation the business demands. Their methods of instruction are defective; and, in some instances, decidedly bad. Even some who have had considerable experience are still building upon a false foundation. Having commenced the business quite young, and continued in it for a series of years without devoting any part of the interim to preparation for greater usefulness, they continue a dull and monotonous routine which deadens the mental activity of the scholar, and destroys the natural attractions of study. They seldom visit other schools to see and learn what advantages they possess; they never attend a teachers' institute to become acquainted with improved methods of instruction—the theory and practice of teaching—and the term normal school has no place in their vocabulary. They hasten from the labors of the field, or the shop, or the domestic concerns of the house to the school room; and then, at the expiration of the term, to their former labors again. No time is devoted to a special preparation for the business of teaching; and among many the idea is that none is needed.

The whole number of teachers employed during the year is one hundred and ninety-one. Of these seventy are males, and one hundred and twenty-one females. Three are graduates of the State normal school, six hold certificates of the State Superintendent, and one hundred and eighty-two are licensed by the commissioner. The graduates of the normal school are among our best teachers; but as they demand higher wages, but few are employed in the schools of this district. They have usually attended the teachers' associations, and added much to the interest by their active efforts and enlarged experience. There is a decided improvement in attendance upon institutes and associations, as will be seen by comparing the register of attendance of this year with former years. However, great chance for improvement still remains; for of the one hundred and ninety-one teachers actually engaged during the past year, only about forty attended the institute; and we seldom see at any



one association more than sixty, while the average would not exceed twenty-five.

About one-tenth of our teachers are engaged both summer and winter; the rest make teaching a temporary employment, and are in service only three or four months in the year. Their wages range from ten shillings per week to thirty dollars per month—the average in summer being about two dollars per week, and in winter about sixteen dollars per month.

**EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.**—The examination of about two hundred teachers has revealed this fact, that proper attention has not been given to the elementary branches usually taught in our schools. Many fail upon the very things they will be called upon to teach. The foundations are unsubstantial. Too much haste to get into the higher branches is a common fault. We have seen candidates well qualified in algebra, geometry and French, fail in the simplest principles in arithmetic, and lamentably defective in orthography. When we build a house we look well to the foundation. Is not a good intellectual foundation equally important?

The grades of certificates granted are as follows: Out of one hundred and eighty-four teachers examined *five* secured the first grade, *forty* the second, *ninety-six* the third, and *forty-three* were rejected as not qualified. Candidates have been examined in the following branches, viz.: *Spelling*, by writing words dictated. The percentage missed ranges from five to eighty-eight—averaging about forty-seven per cent. One only has spelled every word pronounced. *Reading*, by requiring the candidate to read, and assume the position he would require his pupils to take—calling attention to attitude, manner of holding the book, position of the head, chest, shoulders, body, &c.; pronunciation, including enunciation, articulation, and accent; inflection, emphasis, punctuation; quality, pitch, and movement of the voice. Also the method of preventing rapid reading, and avoiding the monotonous school-tone common to nine-tenths of our pupils. *Arithmetic*, dwelling particularly upon the fundamentals—the *why* and *wherefore* of every mathematical process in the more advanced rules. *Grammar*, requiring an analysis of sentences, parsing, &c. *Geography*, use of globes, map-drawing, methods of teaching, &c. *Writing*, position of body, book, holding the pen, &c. *Orthography*, or the elementary sounds of our language, including the phonetic alphabet. *Mental arithmetic*, commencing with the simplest and advancing to the more complicated combinations—requiring the statement, formula, solution, and conclusion in every instance. In the two latter branches there is great deficiency.

**TRUSTEES.**—There is a growing sentiment in favor of one trustee. It has been found in practice that where three are elected one does all the business, and the others are merely nominal. It is seldom we find more than two names attached to a report. At present, however, more have



three than one. It is difficult to change an ancient practice. The ratio is as thirty-three to fifty-two.

According to the best of my recollection, not more than one-tenth of our trustees have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction. In many instances, I presume, all that is necessary to secure compliance is to call their attention to the law. Your circular to trustees, if it alludes to this duty, will, in my opinion, remedy the neglect. I have found many teachers keeping their roll of attendance on a loose sheet of paper—no blank book of any description having been furnished them by the trustees.

**PRIVATE SCHOOLS.**—By reference to my abstract, it will be seen that we have only six private schools with 79 pupils. Although the number of schools is larger, the number of pupils in attendance is less than last year, and we believe they are losing favor. Weak, sickly, and ephemeral they will die out of sheer neglect. In most instances, they are the product of personal dissatisfaction and difficulty in the district; and founded upon such a basis is not destined for long life. The common school is the only permanent popular institution. All others are destined to be absorbed by it. I would not speak against academies and colleges. These are entitled to our hearty support.

We have no parochial schools, nor schools for colored children, nor union free schools organized under the law of 1853. The free school in Port Byron is organized under a special act of the Legislature.

**ACADEMIES.**—The academical department of the Port Byron free school is the only institution of the kind in this district. The number of students in attendance during the past year has been forty, ranging from thirteen to twenty-five years of age.

The building is a fine brick structure, three stories high, well seated and properly heated and ventilated, and surrounded by a pleasant yard ornamented with forest trees and shrubbery. The library contains five hundred and fifty volumes of well selected and readable books. The value of the apparatus, philosophical, mechanical and mathematical, is \$477.

The studies pursued are arithmetic, algebra, geometry, philosophy, geography, reading, spelling, history, Latin, Greek, German, music, drawing, and the normal methods of teaching.

The salary of the principal is \$700 per annum; first assistant, \$210; music teacher, \$216. Tuition ranges from \$3.50 to \$10 per term. The school is supported by taxation, tuition, and the literature fund.

The practical benefits to common schools are, furnishing a model school which, upon visitation by teachers, suggests many new ideas, and thus aids them in their labor in the home field; and also by drilling and furnishing teachers for the schools in this district.

This institution has been selected by the Regents of the University to instruct common school teachers, and from the examination of the teachers' class, we are inclined to think the selection a judicious one.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—The condition of our school libraries is a disgrace to many of the districts. Little care is taken of the books, and large numbers are consequently lost. Instances have been reported to me of families moving west, and taking along with them a number of volumes of the district library, and also of young men who have come into the district as day laborers taking books and carrying them away; others are scattered about the district; no effort is made by the librarian to collect them, and no apparent desire on the part of those who have taken them out to return them. With a few exceptions, the expression is against the practical utility of district school libraries. This is to be regretted. A noble object, truly, but not duly appreciated. There are isolated districts, however, where the books are well cared for and frequently read. If the librarian is a man of system, and prompt in recalling the books, the library pays, and exerts an important influence upon the community.

Many districts appropriate all the library money for the payment of teachers' wages; legal or illegal, they exercise a freedom above the trammels of the law. The following will exhibit the number of volumes, &c., in this district: No. of districts, 85; No. of libraries in 1861, 68, in 1862, 60; No. of volumes in 1861, 6,084, in 1862, 6,767; expended for libraries in 1861, \$321.84, in 1862, \$130.48; expended for apparatus in 1861, \$61.04, in 1862, \$34.60.

Several districts which reported libraries last year have failed to do so this, an evidence of the neglect above mentioned. The town of Conquest, for instance, reported twelve libraries last year, and only seven this, but the number of volumes of the seven exceeds the total of the twelve of the year before by one hundred and twenty-six.

COMMISSIONER'S LABORS.—During the past year I have made 153 official visits, examining into the condition of the schools and the character of the instruction given therein. In visiting said schools, collecting trustees' reports, and attending teachers' associations, I have traveled over two thousand miles. I have attended and conducted ten teachers' associations. I have taken great pains to issue handbills, giving notice of the time and place of the examination of teachers, previous to the commencement of the summer and winter schools, and have examined classes in every town. Notwithstanding, nearly one-half have failed to meet me at such appointments, and consequently have been under the necessity of coming to my residence. At this date, I have examined about two hundred teachers, attended one institute, and have spent in visiting schools, attending said institute and associations, one hundred and forty-four days.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

ISRAEL WILKINSON,  
*School Commissioner.*

MERIDIAN, December 9, 1862.

## SECOND DISTRICT.

AUBURN, December 1, 1862.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Sup't Public Instruction* :

Dear Sir—The following report for the second district of Cayuga county, made in accordance with the instructions found in your circular to school commissioners, received September, 1862, is most respectfully submitted.

The number of pupils of school age reported in this district for the past year is 5,078. Of this number  $76\frac{7}{8}$  per cent. have attended our common schools some part of the year.

I do not think that the rate-bill, with its present leniency, affects the attendance so unfavorably as the short-sighted penuriousness of a portion of our taxable inhabitants would affect it, if the length of our school terms and the cost of their support were left exclusively to their dictation; for in many districts a large proportion of the taxable inhabitants have no children to send to the district schools, and hence would often consult their own immediate pecuniary interest to the lasting injury of those children whose parents are poor. Unless, therefore, the length of the school term was established by legislative enactment to continue for at least eight months of the year, I am in favor of the existing rate-bill. I think that the public sentiment is in favor of it as it is; and then the untaxable people of our school districts are not generally so poor that they are unable and unwilling to share the expenses of a rate-bill for the privileges of the school.

I am gratified to know that a growing interest is manifest throughout this district in providing convenient houses and suitable playgrounds for the comfort and pleasure of our school children. Those wretchedly poor and inconvenient school houses, which belong to a previous age, are being rapidly replaced by buildings which do credit alike to the builders and the cause. And the care and taste manifested in the selection of building sites, the adornment of the yards by forest trees, and in some instances shrubbery and flowers, the erection of suitable out-buildings, etc., evidence the growing intelligence of our people.

While we notice thus favorably the growing interest manifested in the erection of school buildings, etc., we are driven to the opinion that but little attention has been given to the best methods of warming and ventilating the school room. In general, therefore, our school rooms are warmed by means of a wood stove, placed near the centre of the room, and ventilated by raising and letting down the windows. Through the ignorance or inattention of the teachers, therefore, the health of the pupil is often impaired, and all that train of physical evils, which continual confinement in poorly ventilated rooms engender, follow. Still there are a few school houses in this district, lately erected, whose means of



ventilation are of the most improved kind; and from these a good influence is being exerted upon other parts of the district, which we trust will ere long correct this evil.

There is a great dearth of school apparatus in our schools, and what little they have is generally of the poorest kind. A few old out-of-date maps constitute all the apparatus found in a large majority of our schools, and these hang upon the walls rather for ornament than for use. There are but very few schools provided with either the numerical frame, cubical blocks or globe—three things so necessary in illustrating the most important studies pursued in our common schools. Could the money now apportioned to the district library be applied to the purchase of school apparatus, I think it would prove far more useful; for the newspaper and the magazine, which now reach almost every family, furnish reading matter sufficient to wean them from a public library which seldom receives additional works of interest and profit. The libraries of our village schools are exceptions to this general statement. These receive sufficient additions to keep up their interest, and are really a source of much profit.

There is a great variety of text books in our common schools, arising more from a frequent change of teachers than from any other cause.

The text-books generally used are Sanders' and Town's Readers and Spellers; Town's Analysis; Cornell's, Colton and Fitch's, Mitchell's and McNally's Geographies; Thomson's, Robinson's, and Davies' Arithmetics; Robinson's, Day and Thomson's, and Loomis' Algebras; Brown's, Wells', Bullions', and Covell's Grammars.

The studies most generally pursued in our schools are reading, writing, geography, arithmetic, grammar, and algebra.

Children generally commence attending school at four to six years of age, and continue until about twelve years of age, when the boys are usually kept out during the summer, and attend during the winter until sixteen or twenty years of age. Yet they are frequently sent to academies during this time; and the girls are generally sent away to school when they arrive at fourteen or sixteen years of age. So that the whole time that pupils attend our common schools is from six to ten years; and yet, with the disadvantages arising from an almost constant change of teachers, want of apparatus, variety of text-books, and the great irregularity in attendance, the progress of our common schools in this district is very commendable. Could our teachers be employed by the year, our schools supplied with suitable apparatus, parents induced by some means to keep their children regularly at school for a series of years, and then with teachers thoroughly qualified, our common schools would soon compare favorably with our city free schools, and the science of education be raised in the country to that high standard which our growing civilization demands.

The proportion of male and female teachers employed in this district



is four to nine; and of these only one in thirteen following teaching as a permanent employment.

The time that each devotes to teaching is from three to five months in the year, with wages for summer schools varying from \$1.50 to \$1.75 per week, and board; for winter schools from \$14 to \$25 per month, and board. Our village schools pay \$35 per month.

A majority of our teachers manifest a deep interest in teachers' institutes and associations; and those teachers who are thus interested meet with far better success than those who are indifferent to these things.

The examination to which I have subjected teachers embraces those subjects laid down in the school code, together with such other subjects as our school interests seem to demand. Believing that the interests of common school education can be best subserved by raising the standard of qualification in our teachers, the examinations are made more and more rigid, with especial reference to those subjects which are of the most importance, and yet which are too often but imperfectly understood. These have reference more especially to the primary branches, such as orthography, mental arithmetic, analysis of words, history, &c. I find that teachers fail to bear examination in the elementary principles of those branches taught more frequently than they do in the higher branches.

But a small proportion of the teachers of this district have really *studied* the science of teaching as developed in such works as "Page's Theory and Practice of Teaching."

The certificates granted in this district are confined generally to the second and third grades—none receiving the first grade, excepting those whose successful experience, thorough qualification and devotion to the work entitle them to teach the first schools in the district.

During the past year there have been three graduates and two undergraduates of the Normal school employed in this district. These have all met with eminent success, and their influence upon other schools has been large and wholesome. They can command the first schools and the best wages in the district.

There are but three private schools reported, showing a diminution as compared with former years. The number of pupils attending these schools is sixty-two.

There is one union free school district organized under the act of 1853, located in Weedsport village, town of Brutus. The proportion of school districts having but one trustee is one to four—the prevailing sentiment being in favor of three trustees.

A very small proportion of the trustees of this district have complied with the requirements of "No. 116" of the Code of Public Instruction.

The teachers' institute for this county was held at Auburn, beginning Oct. 20th, 1882, and continuing eleven days. There were one hundred and twenty-six in attendance.

The following persons were employed as instructors : M. L. Brown, Auburn ; C. D. Lawton, Auburn ; S. G. Williams, Ithaca ; J. H. French, LL. D., Syracuse ; Rufus Sheldon, Auburn ; C. N. Thomas, Auburn.

The following lectures were delivered during the evenings of the institute : "How to Read and What to Read," by Rufus Sheldon ; "Attention," by the Rev. Henry Fowler ; "Self Education," by the Rev. I. Wilkinson ; "Enthusiasm," by S. G. Williams ; "The English Language," by C. D. Lawton ; "The Dignity and Importance of the Teacher's Work," by the Rev. Samuel Boardman ; "Something about Writing," by Chas. M. Davis ; "Cheerfulness," by Henry Ward ; "Opinion and Belief," by the Rev. Alanson Boughton.

The subjects upon which instruction was given are reading, spelling, analysis, geography, grammar, arithmetic, algebra, penmanship, singing and the natural sciences. In addition to this, extempore lectures were delivered on "The Science of Teaching," "Learning how to Observe," "Object Lessons," "Health," etc.

There was much interest manifested in the institute, both by the members and the inhabitants of the district.

• Within the past year I have visited all the schools in this district, with a few unavoidable exceptions, twice, and several of them three times. In these visitations I have examined the schools, encouraged studiousness in the pupils, made such suggestions to the teachers as I thought necessary, consulted with trustees and patrons with reference to their schools, and thus awakened an interest which has resulted in great good to the cause.

Many of those applying for certificates have failed to pass a satisfactory examination, and have been refused ; while certificates have been granted to those only who gave evidence of thorough scholarship, and by their general demeanor impressed me with the belief that they were competent to instruct in manners and morals as well as in other subjects of education.

Believing that great good can be done through teachers' institutes and teachers' associations, I have zealously labored to awaken a deep and wide-spread interest in them ; and I have evidence that this labor has not been in vain. We have a teachers' association organized in this district, whose meetings are held monthly, and whose exercises are of such a practical character as to confer great benefit upon those attending, and through these upon our schools.

Hoping that this report may meet your approval, I remain,

Most respectfully yours,

WARREN HIGLEY,

*Visitor for the Second District of Cayuga County.*

## CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY—SECOND DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *State Superintendent Public Instruction*:

Dear Sir—I herewith transmit my annual report for the second district of the county of Chautauqua for the year ending September 30, 1862.

There has been no material variation in the attendance of pupils at our schools, between the last year and the one preceding it; none but what may be reasonably accounted for by the scarcity of help in the rural districts. During the past summer many parents were obliged to keep their children at home to assist what they could in securing the products of the soil.

I am fully satisfied that rate-bills have a very sensible effect in decreasing the attendance at our schools, but I do not think this the worst evil they produce. The temptation they place before avaricious parents and school officers is to employ the cheapest (?) teachers that can possibly obtain a license of any grade, and thus make the public money eke out a six months' school without any rate-bill. Our teachers are being discouraged and schools suffering more from this cause than any other. When the parents and patrons of schools, assembled at their annual meetings, will vote that they will pay no higher than \$6 per month for a teacher for their school in the winter, and \$5 in the summer, and that in a district where their taxable property is assessed at over \$40,000, it seems to me this does not indicate a very high appreciation of the intellectual culture of their children. But little is said about the rate-bill system, except by educators and liberal-minded men; still no one that has given any attention to the subject can fail to see the immense advantage of the free school system over the present one.

Improvement in our school buildings moves slowly but surely. Five new school houses have been built during the present year—all neat, tasty and commodious—and the spirit of progress in school buildings fully keeps pace with other improvements.

About one-third of the schools in my district have more or less apparatus—generally less. One great want in our school rooms is phonetic charts for teaching the elements of our language; and comparatively few have any globes. District officers complain that the apparatus purchased for their schools has been lost or destroyed, through carelessness or negligence of teachers. This may be true in some cases, but the real truth is they have not had any secure place to keep them.

The proportion of female teachers to males in my district has been about three to one; the number of females is gradually increasing and of males diminishing, and our schools are not suffering by the change. Were it not for the difficulty in large rural districts of females boarding in the families where the children reside, I think it would add to the usefulness of our district schools, intellectually and morally, to have them



taught *almost* exclusively by females. They love children better than the other sex; their sensibilities are more acute; their sympathies are larger and more active; they are less selfish by nature; and enter more readily into all the little cares, trials and perplexities that beset the path of childhood in the school room, and thus win their way into the affections of the children, and lead them whithersoever they will. And I do not think that females fail in *true* government as often as males. School government, in order to be useful, must teach the pupil to govern himself. This a government of pure force seldom or never does. Whenever the force is withdrawn a reaction takes place, that, in nine cases out of ten, leaves the child worse than it found him. No one will dispute that order is an absolute necessity in school, but to maintain it, I think male teachers much more ready to apply force, before every other expedient is resorted to, than females.

A large majority of my teachers have either studied "Page's Theory and Practice," or own that or "Holbrook's Normal," or "Abbott," or "Northend;" quite a number have them all. I think the proportion of males that make teaching a profession, and follow it during eight or ten months in each year, does not exceed five per cent of the whole number that teach, but of the females full thirty per cent make that their only business, and teach from six to ten months per year. The professional males get salaries varying from \$400 to \$800 per year, and the females get from \$7 to \$30 per month. The most thorough and earnest teachers I have are the most prompt in availing themselves of the benefits to be derived from institutes, associations, visiting the schools of others—in short, using all the means within their reach to improve themselves. It is only another exemplification of the rule, where more requires more, and less requires less. I find my teachers much better qualified in arithmetic—mental and written—than in any other branches of an English education. Their greatest deficiencies are found in orthography, reading, writing and geography. A false standard by which to judge of scholarship appears to have entirely gained the ascendancy here, in our schools of all grades. Teachers, pupils and parents, all seem to think a thorough knowledge of mathematics is all that is necessary to make the complete scholar, and fit the citizen for all the duties of life. In fact, one would think that many of our teachers teach reading only for the purpose of enabling their pupils to study the rules of arithmetic, and writing just enough to enable them to make figures. I am laboring earnestly to counteract this system of teaching, and I am happy to say with decided success. Our common schools are not alone in this erratic course of instruction; indeed I think our teachers learned it at our higher seminaries.

During the two years I have been in office, I have not granted more than a dozen first grade certificates, neither do I intend to give many during the coming year. I find too many teachers, when they get a



three years' license, become indifferent to their own improvement, thinking, apparently, that they have got to the head of the profession. I have no sympathy with the indifference of such teachers, and do not mean to encourage it. Two-thirds of the certificates I have granted have been of the second grade, but many of them for only six months. I wish to keep the majority of my teachers as near to me as possible; I wish them clearly to understand that if they wish to teach they must also learn. I do not wish you to infer from what I have said that I think the qualifications of my teachers, or their interest in their work, is below the standard in other counties in the State; my feelings and views are very different from that; I have two hundred *live* teachers in my district that I should be very unwilling to exchange for the same number taken from any commissioner's district in the State; I love and respect them as earnest and hearty co-laborers in that cause which is dear to us all—the moral and intellectual cultivation of the rising generation; and my watchfulness is to prevent unworthy applicants from gaining admission to their ranks.

There are but few Normal school graduates in this district; none, to my knowledge, lack employment. The western States offer greater inducements to well qualified teachers; greater both as to pecuniary considerations and opportunities to build up a reputation as teachers; hence many of our Normal graduates emigrate. The few that are still teaching in this district, by their thoroughness and success, do honor to our State school that educated them; and they, by their untiring energy and persevering industry in advancing the cause of education, deserve great credit themselves.

My duties in aid of the common schools have required so much of my time that it has been impossible for me so to acquaint myself with the condition and working of our academies as to answer understandingly the questions proposed in your circular; the patronage bestowed upon them, and the interest taken in them by the wealthy and influential, place them, in point of *means* for usefulness, so far above our common schools, that justice compels me to spend my time in doing what I can for the latter, though I should be compelled to neglect the former. As to the practical benefit derived by common school teachers from attending the classes in academies paid for by the State, I can only refer you to my last year's report; I have seen no cause since to change my opinion there expressed, or add anything to the suggestion there offered. I do not see why principals of academies should be expected to know the wants of our common schools; they are not at all conversant with them; they have more matured mind to teach; they teach the higher branches of an English education, not the elementary, which are, or *ought* to be, taught in our common schools. I think teachers in academies assume that all that come to them for instruction are masters of the rudiments of an English education, and this certainly should be so, and they base

their instruction accordingly. Let me give you a case or two, showing the fallacy of the assumption: a young lady of eighteen years wished to get a license to teach without an examination; she wrote me; inclosing a very flattering recommendation from the principal of an academy, vouching for her moral character, scholarship, qualifications to teach, &c., telling how long she had attended his school, and certifying to her faithfulness as a student. The young lady wrote nearly six lines across a sheet of note paper, mis-spelled just six words, and made two glaring grammatical errors in her composition. Again, in examining a class of eleven teachers just graduated from a teachers' class in one of our academies, I gave them twenty-four very common words to spell by writing; five of the class mis-spelled thirteen words each, one missed eleven words, and the remainder of the class from five to ten words each. Many of my teachers, both last year and the present, have told me that they acquired more practical knowledge, available to them as teachers, from attending our institute two weeks, than they ever had from a whole term in a teachers' class at the academy. I do not say where the fault lies; I merely state facts as they come under my observation. I have no wish to lessen the patronage of our academies, but to increase it, and I have no fears that they will get too much support from the State. But I do not think it just that the moneys expended on teachers' classes should be charged as so much expended for the common schools, while the *real* benefit is not received by them. My own opinion is, if any of our existing schools must be chosen and paid for instructing our teachers, it should be our best graded schools, for there our teachers can be taught not only *what* but *how* to teach children; at any rate, my teachers receive more benefit from them than from any other, except the State Normal school. Still, I do not see any reason for altering my opinion on the suggestion in my last report, which was that the amount of money now expended on teachers' classes be devoted to holding institutes, under the direction and supervision of the head of the State Department of Public Instruction.

The number of private schools is gradually decreasing from year to year in this district, and this will continue till there will be none, *if* our common schools continue to advance to the fulfillment of their high mission.

"Parochial schools" and schools specially for colored children, we have none; all our schools are open for colored children; and I am gratified to be able to state, that the children of color in our schools do no discredit, in either morals, manners, or intellectual attainments, to their teachers or school-fellows.

There are but two "Union Free Schools" in this district, one at Dunkirk and the other at Forestville; both are decidedly successful, and on careful observation, must convince any unprejudiced mind of their superiority over all others, especially for large villages. We have a

number of other graded schools, not free ; they are doing well, and are a great saving in the expense of educating our children, besides doing their work so much more thoroughly. The largest of these is at Fredonia, it is admirably conducted, and, in point of usefulness, is not exceeded by any school in the district. The citizens of that village deserve great credit for the interest they take, and the manner in which they sustain their district schools ; and when they consolidate all the schools in the village into one "Union Free School," they will have completed the good work they have so nobly commenced. The instruction given might not be any more thorough, but the attendance would be larger and more regular; and its sphere of usefulness greatly enlarged.

Our "District School Libraries" have had their day of usefulness, and are fast passing away ; and the money now expended on them is nearly thrown away ; the necessity that called them into existence has passed, and with it their utility ; they have performed a great and good work, in cultivating a taste for reading, and begetting a thirst for knowledge which refuses to be denied—as the centre-table in the sitting-room of every farm-house, and the shelves in every cottage abundantly testify by the quantities of "Books," "Magazines," and "Newspapers" they contain. A few districts still take commendable care of their libraries, but complain that they are a burden, and are almost useless to the masses—they are not read. Would it not be well to empower districts, that wish to do so, to sell their "Libraries" and use the money to purchase "Apparatus" for their school-rooms, under the advice and direction of the Supt. of Pub. Instruction. Apparatus is much needed, and all would be benefited by it ; but in many districts the best books in their libraries are being appropriated by individuals of *some* literary taste to their own libraries, to save them from destruction, and the masses whom the State designed to benefit will be defrauded of the boon.

In 86 of my schools they elect but one trustee ; in 65 they have three, and the two free schools have "Boards of Directors ;" the number of districts that choose but one is increasing, which I take to be an evidence of growing public favor to the system. Where districts are divided into parties, and are continually wrangling over some trifling matter, they cannot get along without three trustees, as one could not quarrel very sharply alone, and the feud would die, to the destruction of *all* their interest in their school. But where everything is moving in harmony, and the main effort is to render their school as useful as possible, generally one trustee suffices to do the business ; and in most cases it is more promptly and correctly done by one than three. The reason doubtless is, because there is no division of responsibility.

As to the proportion of the trustees who have complied with the requirements of "No. 116," of the "Code of Public Instruction," I am unable exactly to say ; it is one of the things of which I have neglected to make a minute in my visits, although I always inquire. My views



were fully expressed on this subject last year, and those views are confirmed by the results of this year's experience.

In the reports of the attendance at school, I am satisfied there are and must be gross errors—not intentional, perhaps, but arising from want of any correct data on which to base the reports. I am confident that in very many cases it is mere guessing; and this will continue to be so until districts shall in some way be supplied with proper "Books" for keeping their rolls. I think not one-fifth of my districts are so supplied. I hope the Department or Legislature, or both, will take this matter in hand at an early day.

The number of days that our last county institute was in session was eleven.

The regular teachers employed were Charles Hathaway, Esq., of Westfield, he taught reading, English grammar and mental arithmetic; R. E. Post, Esq., of Fredonia, orthography, geography and written arithmetic—these were taught during the whole session; Prof. J. Madison Watson, of New York, taught phonetics, elocution and calisthenics two days; Prof. N. A. Calkins, of New York, object lessons, &c., five days; Hon. V. M. Rice, Albany, "The Cultivation of Taste in the Arts by referring children to the teachings of nature as the correct standard," one day. Lecturers were, Rev. Mr. Forester, of Erie, Pa., subject—"The War, its Cause and its Cure;" Rev. Mr. Rouse, Jamestown, New York, "Aeronautics;" A. W. Young, Esq., Ripley, N. Y., "Science of Government;" Prof. J. M. Watson, New York city, "Elocution;" Prof. N. A. Calkins, New York city, "Pestalozzian System of Teaching;" Prof. J. A. Cooper, Edinboro Normal School Pa., "General Lecture;" J. C. Long, Westfield, N. Y., "Mission of the Teacher and Student;" Hon. V. M. Rice, Albany, N. Y., "Reading, and the Government of Schools." On the Sabbath the Rev. Mr. Burgess, of Panama, preached a most excellent sermon, prepared specially for the teachers. The number of teachers in attendance was over 330. A few that came the last week neglected to have their names enrolled. There is an increased and increasing interest manifest in favor of our county institutes—not by our teachers only, but by parents and school officers also—and their usefulness will become more and more apparent if they are properly conducted.

The detail of the commissioner's labors must be a very general one; more than six months of the year is devoted to visiting schools during five days in the week; Saturdays are reserved for his correspondence, and to meet those who wish to see him on official business. It takes more than a month during the year to meet teachers' classes for examination and instruction, another month to prepare for and attend the institute. The other general duties of the office are making the apportionment of school moneys to the several districts; compiling the annual report to the "State Department;" attending picnics, and writing and delivering lectures when he can find time; and far more perplexing than all these, the alteration, formation, and disorganization



of school districts; attempting to settle quarrels in districts, and sometimes making them worse—all these, and many minor duties, he has tried to perform to the best of his ability. In short, if you wish to know how much he has worked for his \$500 per annum, suffice it to say, that from a daily account kept during the first half of this year, he positively knows that his labors will average over nine hours per day for every working day in the year.

With regard to the general progress of the schools in this district, I can truly say that, while it is not what it should be, or what I hope it will be, still it is both encouraging and important.

Your circular inquires for the most urgent wants of our schools. Amongst so many, where shall I begin? For all wants that hinder the right education of our children are urgent wants. But, to begin, we want in this district a better commissioner; one that knows more of everything and everybody, and one that can endure more labor, mental and physical, than four just like him. We want a corps of better educated, more self-denying teachers, who will be content to labor for the good of the rising generation, utterly ignoring any physical wants themselves. We want parents who think as much of the moral and mental culture of their children as they do of their farms and bank stock. We want school officers who are willing to pay a fair equivalent for labor performed by the faithful teacher. We want a Legislature that will immortalize itself, and secure the thanks of all coming generations by placing our school system on a "free" and liberal basis beyond the reach of avarice and extortion; for until the State shall claim all the children as her own (as they truly are,) and makes ample provision for their education, intellectual, moral, social, and civil, thus fitting them to become intelligent and virtuous citizens, I fear the work will never be accomplished; that the great masses of our citizens will not be so cultivated as to be an honor to the State that reared them and a blessing to the world. Is it true that the education of our children is *really* of less value than any of the other objects and pursuits in life that men are engaged in? One thing is certain, that less wages are paid to worthy, qualified, and faithful teachers of children than to laborers of the same qualifications in any other calling. While at the same time it cannot be denied that the teachers of our State are doing more to form and direct the habits of thought and mold the characters, mental and moral, of the next generation than all other professions and callings combined. It is true, complaints are made that teachers do not qualify themselves properly for the performance of their high and responsible trust; and this complaint is just, in many instances; but it is equally true that more than half of our best qualified teachers are literally starved out of the profession—not because they prefer some other, but because necessity compels them to flee to something else to get bread for themselves and families. Now, how can our schools be elevated to, and maintained at

that high standard which the best interests of our common country, the prosperity of our State, and the welfare of our individuals require, so long as the present system continues of thrusting out our devoted and experienced teachers and supplying their places with those who will work cheap?

Another great hindrance to the advancement of our schools is the continued change of teachers every three or four months. It takes a good teacher just about that time to introduce his system into a strange school, and get it into good working order; he gets the rubbish removed, his foundation laid, and just commences to build, but his term has expired, and another takes his place who does not understand, or does not approve his plan, and he goes over the same ground by some other method, and his term expires; and so on to the end of the chapter. The habits of thought and reasoning introduced and initiated by one teacher are broken up by the next, till the mind of the child becomes a confused jumble of ideas, without any plan of clear and well-defined thought on any subject, and thus they are turned out into the world to *guess* their way through it as best they can. I have often wondered that our children leave school knowing half as much as they do. Were it not for the scraps of practical education picked up in the nooks and corners of life, no one knows where or how, the results of our system of education would be much more deplorable than they are.

But whose is the wise head that shall devise the plan, and whose the noble heart that shall present it to the people of our State—a plan that shall satisfy *some* of these most “urgent wants” of our schools?

Very respectfully, and truly yours,

A. P. WHITE, *School Commissioner.*

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### CHENANGO COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Sup't Public Instruction:*

The following is the report on public instruction required by your circular of August 27th, 1862:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—One of the greatest evils that retard the progress of our schools is the non-attendance of many scholars of suitable age, and the irregular attendance of those reported as attending. Not more than three-quarters of those reported by trustees are found to have attended our common schools within the year. This result is to some extent owing to the effect of rate-bills. Many withhold their children from school through fear of a heavy rate-bill at the close of the term; yet liberal-minded and judicious parents generally regard the rate-bill with favor.

The school houses of my district are not such as the best interests of community demand. Too many are mere rickety tenements, set by

the roadside, without inclosure or ornament of any kind. Yet there are *some* elegant and *many* respectable exceptions to the above statement. These exceptions should be the general rule; and it is cheering that community is beginning to appreciate the importance of providing better accommodations for the education of their children. Most school houses have out-houses in poor condition—generally a single structure, without screen or division.

The apparatus generally consists of a dictionary, black-board, more or less maps and charts on the walls, and some have globes. The furniture consists of a chair, table or desk, water-pail, and cup. The houses are generally warmed by stoves, and ventilated by lowering and raising windows.

Scholars are generally poorly supplied with text books, two frequently using the same book; and many that ought to be in the same class are compelled to join different classes from having different text books on the same subject.

BRANCHES PURSUED.—Orthography, reading, writing, intellectual and written arithmetic, geography, and English grammar. Algebra and physiology are studied in the more advanced schools.

Pupils enter school at the age of three or four years, and leave school between the ages of fourteen and eighteen years. The larger scholars generally attend school during the winter term only. Progress under such circumstances must of necessity be slow.

Their greatest wants are, 1st. The awakening of a more general interest in our common schools. 2d. Better school houses and facilities for education; and 3d. Better qualified teachers. The last two would result from the first.

TEACHERS.—The proportion of those who taught during the past year is 235 females to 97 males. Males generally teach three or four months in winter, and pursue other avocations in summer. Wages from \$14 to \$25 per month for males; females from \$1.25 to \$4 per week in summer, and from \$10 to \$20 per month in winter. Not more than one-half of those who teach attend teachers' institutes.

Teachers' associations are well attended, both by parents and teachers, in the back towns, and are occasions of much interest, but in the large villages they are poorly attended.

The examinations of teachers are thorough, close and searching, calculated to impart a knowledge of the best methods of teaching, as well as to ascertain the candidates' knowledge of the several branches taught. I find teachers most deficient in orthography, mental arithmetic, and mathematical geography. Few have studied any work on teaching; yet many are awakening to this subject, and are procuring such works as "Page's Theory and Practice," etc., "Holbrook's Normal Methods of Teaching," "Northend's Parent and Teacher," and many other works indispensable to the teacher. Nearly fifty subscribed for the "New York Teacher" at our last institute.



Certificates granted are generally of the second and third grades. Trustees who see the real wants of our schools demand better teachers, and pay higher wages for higher qualifications. There are but few Normal graduates or undergraduates employed in this district. Most of them are engaged in union and academic schools in other counties of the State.

The number of private schools is nine, and the number of scholars in attendance is 167. For the increase or decrease of these schools you are respectfully referred to reports now in the Department.

In reference to district school libraries, I regret to say they are held in low estimation by the people. They are, with few exceptions, a dead letter in our common school system. Many of them contain 50 volumes of Harper's Family Library (original series.) Selections since made are of a miscellaneous character—travels, biographies, and some lighter works.

TRUSTEES.—The people seem to prefer three; yet this is perhaps more from custom than from a conviction of the superior utility of having three. On the suggestions of myself, and from other causes, I think the number of those districts having three trustees is gradually diminishing, and the districts having but one correspondingly increasing. For the proportion of each, the Department is respectfully referred to my special report on trustees, now in your Department.

Of the number of districts which have complied with the law, as contained in No. 116, page 261 of the Code, I have no means of knowing, not having made special inquiry into that point at my visitations of the schools.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—The last institute was held at Oxford, commencing October 6th, 1862, and closing October 18th; in session twelve days. Instructors: Orville Benedict, South Plymouth; Edgar Garret, Afton; Isaac B. Collins, Smyrna; Michael R. Cook, Oriskany, Oneida county; Prof. D. G. Barber, Principal Oxford Academy; and Professor Holcombe, of Oxford Academy. Instruction was given in orthography, reading, elocution, penmanship, mental and written arithmetic, geography, English grammar, algebra, and philosophy. Much effort was made to impart a knowledge of the best modes of teaching the different branches usually taught in our common schools. The number of teachers in attendance was 268.

LECTURERS.—Orville Benedict, "Responsibility of the Teacher;" Rev. Mr. Williams, Recitation of several original poems; Rev. Mr. Benedict, "Modes and Tenses of Teaching;" Rev. Mr. Searles, "Teaching and Teachers;" Rev. Mr. Scoville, "Young America;" Rev. Mr. Ballou, "Education;" Michael R. Cook, "Qualifications of Teachers;" Milton N. Simmons, "Instructions to Teachers;" Daniel E. Whitmore, "History of Education;" Delos Luther, "The Teacher."

There was considerable interest manifested by the public in the exercises and lectures of the institute.



SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—During the past year I have visited 297 schools. I have in my district 11 towns, and 155 schools; I have reached them all twice, with the exception of 13; I should have more than reached them *all* twice had I not been prevented by an attack of the diphtheria, which confined me ten days. I have held nine sessions of the Chenango teachers' association within the past year. I have met the teachers twice for examination in each of the eleven towns of my district. I prepared and delivered three lectures, besides a multitude of sub-lectures, in the several school districts and towns of my district. I thoroughly canvassed the eleven towns of my district, and visited the teachers personally, to induce them to attend our last institute. I also distributed 150 circulars among the teachers of my district, that no means should be left untried which might be available in bringing out the teachers. I had also to visit all the towns of my district to obtain the names of the trustees of the several school districts, that I might report to the department, in obedience to a requisition from the same.

ACADEMIES.—There is but one academy in my district, which is located at Norwich. The number of students in attendance during the term ending July 31st, 1862, was 189, of which 127 were reported as academic. Average age of males, about 17 years; females, about 16. Number of students during fall term, 175.

One building, three stories, besides basement. The rooms are: lecture room, ladies' room, room for English department, room for primary department, and four recitation rooms. The third story is divided into study rooms—not occupied. The library consists of between 300 and 400 volumes.

The apparatus is sufficient to illustrate the different topics in natural philosophy; also sufficient for analysis in chemistry. A good Theodolite, and a new set of Pelton's outline maps.

Teach all the English branches, higher mathematics, the natural sciences, Latin, Greek, German and French.

Wages: principal, \$650; teacher English department, \$450; preceptress, \$350; teacher primary department, \$150. Sources of support: tuition and appropriation from Literary fund. Rates of tuition: English, \$12; higher mathematics, \$18; natural sciences and languages the same.

There are special provisions made for teachers of common schools during two terms of the year, and those teachers trained and disciplined in the teachers' department are among the best teachers in my district. The principal and his assistants have been common school teachers, and cordially co-operate with the commissioners in every effort to improve our common schools.

There is one parochial school in my district, which is at North New Berlin. The number of students in attendance is 75.

In conclusion, permit me to say that the prospect for the future (of our schools at least) is encouraging. The community is awakening to their

better interests by employing better teachers, and providing better facilities for instruction. Teachers are becoming more earnest in their work than formerly; while the drones are being excluded from the hive.

ORVILLE BENEDICT,

*School Commissioner.*

PLYMOUTH, *December 15, 1862.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

AFTON, *December 1, 1862.*

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

The school commissioner of the second district of Chenango county, in compliance with the requirement of the Department, begs leave to submit the following report in relation to public instruction within said district.

COMMON SCHOOLS.—The number of persons of school age within this district on the 30th day of September last was 7,088. Of this number 5,403 attended school some portion of the time during the past year, leaving the number between the ages of four and twenty-one years 1,685 who have not attended school during the past year. Rate-bills drive many children from the schools, and are avoided as much as possible by those sending to school. There are 138 school houses in the district, about one-half of which are new and convenient buildings. Of the other half a portion are unfit for use, while the remainder are more comfortable, but are not what they should be. Most of the sites are too small, leaving no playground except the highway. The outbuildings are much neglected, and are usually in want of repairs. The school furniture usually consists of a table, a chair, a water-pail and cup. The school houses are warmed by stoves, and they are ventilated by letting down the window-sash. A few schools have globes; all have blackboards; about one-half have normal charts; about one-fourth have outline maps, and three-fourths have maps either of the United States, of this State, or of the county. The text-books mostly used are Sanders' Spellers and Readers, McNally's Geography, Colburn's and Robinson's Intellectual Arithmetic, Thomson's and Robinson's Practical Arithmetic, Robinson's Algebra, Brown's Grammar, Comstock's Natural Philosophy, and Hale's History. The branches of study mostly pursued are orthography, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, philosophy, and algebra. Pupils usually begin their attendance at about four years of age, and end at from sixteen to twenty. The whole time they are allowed to attend school, I think, will average from five to seven years. The general progress of the schools is very encouraging. Their most urgent wants are a greater degree of interest and more liberality on the part of their patrons; a greater uniformity in text-books and higher grade of teachers.

**TEACHERS.**—The whole number who have taught in this district during the past year is 295—92 males and 203 females. About one-fourth follow teaching as a permanent employment—the remainder temporarily. They devote from one to six years to teaching. Their wages in summer vary from one to four dollars per week; in winter from fourteen to thirty per month. Their attendance on the teachers' institute this year has been very liberal. I think three-fourths were present at our last institute. I examine them in all the branches taught in our common schools; also in relation to the theory and practice of teaching. I find them best prepared to teach arithmetic and grammar, and most deficient in reading, geography, and history. Very few have studied any work on the theory and practice of teaching until recently. About one-third have now some work on the above subject. I have issued 14 certificates of the first grade, 276 of the second, and 6 of the third, to teachers during the past year. The demand for teachers of higher qualifications is small, and the schools requiring such teachers are easily supplied. There are no Normal school graduates teaching in this district.

**ACADEMIES.**—There is but one in this district, which is the Oxford academy, located in the village of Oxford; it has a fine building, well supplied with libraries, and chemical and philosophical apparatus. The teachers' classes, under the instruction of Prof. G. D. Barber, are well drilled, and are of great practical benefit to our common schools.

**PRIVATE SCHOOLS.**—During the past year there have been five private schools taught within this district, with an attendance of 140 pupils, being a decrease since 1849 of 12 schools and 320 pupils.

**DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.**—They are in a neglected condition; the character of the books composing them is mostly good; the people do not appear to hold them in high estimation.

**PRIVATE LIBRARIES, PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS.**—Most of the families—say five-sixths—are supplied with newspapers or periodicals, and most of them have something of a library. The effect of the news for the past year has attracted the attention of the people from all other reading.

**TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.**—Our last was in session twelve days; the persons employed as instructors, were Isaac B. Collins, Smyrna, Chenango Co.; M. R. Cook, graduate of Normal school; Prof. D. G. Barber, Oxford, Chenango Co.; Prof. Holcombe, Oxford, Chenango Co. Instruction was given on the theory and practice of teaching, orthography, reading, geography, arithmetic—intellectual and practical—English grammar, natural philosophy, algebra, physiology, &c.

The names of the lecturers and their subjects were as follows: Rev. Mr. Searls, Norwich, Chenango Co., "Young America;" Rev. Mr. Benedict, Norwich, "Moods and Tenses of Teachers;" Rev. Mr. Williams, Oxford, Recitation of several Poems; Rev. Mr. Ballou, Oxford, "Education and Teachers;" Comr. Benedict, Plymouth, "Responsibility of



the Teacher ;" Milton F. Simmons, Greene, " Education and its Effect ;" Delos Luther, Pharsalia, " Education and Qualification of Teachers ;" M. R. Cook, Oneida Co., " To Teachers."

The whole number of teachers in attendance was 268. Much interest was manifested by the public in the exercises.

TRUSTEES.—The sentiment of the people is about equally divided as to one or three ; 58 districts have one, and 80 have three. I think all of them have complied with No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—From the first of January to the first of April is devoted to visiting schools, attending to complaints against teachers, and attending teachers association, &c. The month of April is devoted to the examination of teachers in the different towns ; from the first of May to the 15th of September to visiting schools, attending to applications for the division of school districts, &c.; from the 15th of Sept. to the 5th of Oct., making preparation for teachers' institute ; from the 5th to the 18th, attending institute ; from the 20th to the 9th of November, examining teachers in the different towns, and collecting trustees' reports ; from the 9th to the 1st of December, making abstract of trustees' reports ; and December is devoted to visiting schools and attending to whatever may be required.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

EDGAR GARRET,

*School Comr. 2d Dist., Chenango Co.*

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## CLINTON COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

To Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Pub. Instruction :*

Sir—In our climate, where "academic groves" would afford but poor shelter, the school house claims our early attention. Of the ninety-eight structures in my district, but few are entitled to the name school house, and none of them are in any respect what they should be. Only three have any means of ventilation, except the doors and windows. In two districts the houses are so old and dilapidated that one may look through the roof and sides, and yet a majority at every meeting refuse to build a new house.

Wood is the only fuel used. About one-half of the school rooms are furnished with black-boards, and only eleven with globes. With three exceptions, the only out-buildings are temporary structures made of boards and cedar posts set in the ground, while in many of the newer districts there are none at all.

With text books the schools are generally well supplied. Town's series of Readers, Speller and Definer, Webster's Elementary Spelling Book, Adams' Arithmetic, and McNally's Geography, are in general use. Arithmetic is the branch most generally pursued.



The pupils begin their attendance at the age of five years, and keep up an intermittent attendance till the age of fifteen, and it is estimated that the average attend school about three years between the ages above mentioned.

This small attendance is caused by the bad condition of the school houses, the need that parents have of the children's labor, and the fear of *rate-bills*, which are held in great disfavor by a majority in this district. Parents of limited means, when the public money is all expended, withdraw their children from school.

Two-thirds of the teachers are females; and of those who have taught the past year only four follow teaching as a permanent employment. The average wages for males, exclusive of board, are \$16 per month; for females, \$1.25 per week.

The teachers are examined in writing. Subjects are given to them in all the common branches, and they are required to write out their answers in full. They are generally best prepared to teach arithmetic (written), but their preparation, with few exceptions, has not been derived from any treatise on school teaching. The certificates granted are mostly of the *second grade*.

The whole number of students at the Plattsburgh academy is 175, of whom 81 are males, and 94 are females, as follows:

Number of students 8 years of age and less than 9.....	11
do 9 do do 10.....	9
do 10 do do 11.....	9
do 11 do do 12.....	13
do 12 do do 13.....	15
do 13 do do 14.....	15
do 14 do do 15.....	28
do 15 do do 16.....	16
do 16 do do 17.....	14
do 17 do do 18.....	19
do 18 do do 19.....	8
do 19 do do 20.....	7
do 20 do do 21.....	3
do 21 do do 22.....	1
do 22 do do 23.....	5
do 23 do do 24.....	2
Total.....	175

The library consists of 191 volumes, and is valued at \$266.99. The chemical and philosophical apparatus is valued at \$474.

There are five assistant teachers, two of whom are paid \$300, and three are paid \$250 per annum.

Its support is derived from tuition, of which the rates are as follows:

Common English, per quarter.....	\$3 00
Higher, do .....	4 00
Ancient languages, do .....	5 00
Modern do do .....	6 25
Music and drawing, extra.	<u>          </u>

In 1859 there were 11 private schools, and 202 pupils.

In 1860 there were 10 private schools, and 224 pupils.

In 1861 there were 5 private schools, and 188 pupils.

In 1862 there were 16 private schools, and 343 pupils.

The increase is in the town of Dannemora, where many of the keepers of the prison have schools in their families.

The school libraries are badly kept, and notwithstanding the annual appropriation, the number of books is diminishing. The basis of the school libraries is Harper's Family Library, and the rest is made up of such books as artful agents impose upon the trustees. There is only one well selected library in my district, and that one (district No. 1, Ausable) will compare favorably with any library of the same size in the State. The libraries have been driven out of use by the New York Ledger and other periodicals, which are found in every family.

About one-fourth of the districts have one trustee, but the majority regard one trustee as "a one man power," and dangerous to their liberties. All the trustees in my district have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the "Code of Public Instruction." The record of the proceedings of the institute in this county are in the hands of Mr. Chandler, my associate, who, I presume, will give you a full report in regard to the institute.

In the spring and fall, before the time for beginning the schools, I hold an examination for teachers in each town in my district. As soon as schools have begun I commence my tour of inspection, and continue it till the schools are all visited at least once. Last winter the roads were much of the time perfectly impassable. I find it necessary in the school room to take the place of teacher, for precept is very often thrown away, unless accompanied by example. Much time is spent in trying to create an interest in the district libraries, and in examining two or three schools at the same time and place, by which laudable emulation is created among them. During the vacations my time is much occupied in unraveling the complications which are sure to result from the *joint* labors of three trustees; and it affords me pleasure to inform you that only one lawsuit has resulted from their innumerable blunders during the year.

Yours very respectfully,

H. N. HEWITT,

*School Commissioner.*

*December 27th, 1862.*

## COLUMBIA COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

TO HON. VICTOR M. RICE, *Sup't Public Instruction*:

Sir—According to your requirement, I submit to you the following report:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—There is an increasing interest manifested on the part of the inhabitants in relation to common schools. This is shown in their building better school houses, securing better school apparatus, and expressing a desire to obtain better teachers. It is also shown in their children attending school for a longer period than formerly.

TIME, ETC., FOR ATTENDING SCHOOLS.—In this district children usually attend the common school from the age of four to twelve years. After this, those who are sufficiently advanced, or whose parents are wealthy, are sent to the higher schools. About one-half of the persons of school age attend school, and generally attend more regularly than formerly.

EFFECT OF RATE-BILLS.—The effect of moderate rate-bills, I think, has a tendency to stimulate rather than hinder a good attendance. This is evidenced from the fact that those schools which are supported mainly or entirely by the public money, care but little about the kind of teacher they have, or the regularity in their children attending school, while those who pay large rate-bills are generally interested in these respects.

CONDITION OF SCHOOL HOUSES, &c.—The school houses are generally comfortable, and a number of them will compare favorably with any in the State. The playgrounds are generally small, in many cases nothing but what should be included in the public highway.

SCHOOL APPARATUS, &c.—In nearly every school house there is a black-board, but there is a deficiency in globes and maps. I think measures should be taken to supply them; and in addition, I think there should be a normal chart in every school house.

TEACHERS.—There were more females than males who taught during the past year. This was owing partly to the idea that they are the best to teach our primary schools, and partly to the difference in wages. About one-third of them make teaching a profession, while the others teach when it pays well, or will answer as a stepping-stone to another profession.

WAGES, &c.—Teachers' wages are from eight to twelve dollars per month and board, in summer (except in some large districts, where they hire male teachers the entire year), and from twelve to twenty-two in winter. In a majority of the districts teachers are required to board with the employers.

CHARACTER OF EXAMINATIONS.—The character of the examinations has been more to ascertain the teachers' knowledge of general principles, and their faculty of imparting that knowledge, than their superior scholarship. I have always, except in two or three special instances, subjected the teachers to rigid examinations. I have found many, especially those who have attended the higher schools, and some even



who have been trained in normal classes at our seminaries, very deficient in the elementary branches. Many measure their capacity for teaching solely by the number of studies they have pursued, without any regard to the thoroughness with which they have mastered them. And trustees are often carried away by the same idea, and hire a teacher because he assumes to understand the languages and higher mathematics, when he is really destitute of all the essential qualities of a good teacher.

**DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.**—The district school libraries are truly in a deplorable condition. There is no system about their distribution or preservation, and hence probably not one-half of the books that composed the original libraries are now extant. In this age of newspapers, few care to read them. Unfortunately there have been some poor selections, yet nevertheless there are many good books. But I am satisfied that under the present system nothing can be done to make them productive of much good. It would be well if some action could be taken to effect a change for the better. I would suggest the propriety of having town libraries.

**SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.**—During the past year I have made 139 visitations, generally remaining one half day in each school. I aimed at visiting each school twice during the year, but some schools were having their vacations at the time I was in their immediate vicinity, and it was not convenient to visit them afterwards. I have endeavored to make each visit productive of some good, and have never been satisfied with a mere call of a few minutes, but generally find a half day too short to do all I would like to do. Though all that was anticipated at the commencement of the year has not been realized, yet at every successive visitation a little improvement is manifest. Public examinations have been held in each town twice during the past year, occupying two weeks in the spring and two in the fall. Not only have they been the means of testing the qualifications of teachers, but a source of benefit to them, and a means of awakening to the inhabitants. An effort was made last year to organize and sustain a teachers' association, but for various causes it was not successful. There has been a district school picnic for two years in succession, in which all the schools under my supervision were invited. They have certainly been productive of good. I have had several applications to make alterations in school districts; some of them have been attended to, in others, where the propriety of a change was considered doubtful, the applicants have been persuaded to withdraw their applications. I have enumerated only a portion of the labor performed during the past year; suffice it to say, the work demands the greater portion of my time. It has been my desire to perform all the duties required of me, yet the result anticipated has not been realized. But I trust when our national difficulties shall be settled, there will be a more general appreciation of the benefits resulting from a liberal education.

HARTWILL REYNOLDS,

ANCRAM LEAD MINES, Nov. 26, 1862.

*School Commissioner.*



## SECOND DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Public Instruction*:

In addition to my annual abstract of the reports of trustees, I submit the following report on public instruction within my official jurisdiction:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—I find in most of the schools that not one-half, and in many districts not one-quarter of the number of children reported by trustees, are in attendance at school on each official visitation. The reason of which is, I think, that the law allows all to be reported between 4 and 21 years.

RATE-BILLS.—In some districts the rate-bills have a tendency to keep children out of school, and public sentiment, in some instances, is in favor of establishing free schools. Many who can pay their school bills just as well as not, will not do so because they have no property exposed on which a levy can be made, while others owning a small house and lot, but receiving less wages than the former, are obliged to pay their rate-bills.

SCHOOL HOUSES, &c.—There are one hundred and eight school houses. Some of them are new and finely arranged for school purposes, others are in tolerable condition, while a few are poor and unsuitable for school purposes. A few are surrounded with yards containing trees and flowers, while others stand exposed without tree or shrub. Nearly all have an out-building attached; some are kept with great care, while others are offensive in the extreme. Some of the school-rooms are well furnished, containing maps, a globe, some philosophical apparatus, an orrery and geometrical blocks. All the school-rooms are warmed by stoves, some using wood, others coal. Intelligent teachers ventilate their rooms by dropping the upper sash of the window, others sometimes open the door for a short time, while some never think so far as to ventilate at all. The text books are numerous. My colleague and I endeavored to establish a uniformity of text books, and almost succeeded, but others interfering, have in some districts interrupted our plan. The great complaint with teachers is, "we have so few books alike that we cannot form classes as we would."

Reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography and grammar are taught, or expected to be taught, in every school; while in some schools there are classes formed in algebra, natural philosophy, physiology and book-keeping.

I have found some very young children attending our schools; but the larger part in attendance are between the ages of six and sixteen; beyond sixteen I have found not many in the summer or winter schools.

The question is frequently asked me, if, in my opinion, the district schools are improving. The answer to this question depends on circumstances. At one time I find the same school in quite a different condition from another. At one time I find the larger and more advanced

pupils in the school under the instruction of a competent teacher, and then I say there is a decided improvement in the school. At the next visitation I find the smaller children of the district, in attendance upon the school, under a different teacher, but none the less capable, but the classes being less advanced the impression upon the mind of a visitor is that the school is not advancing; but this is the way country schools operate, and I know of no remedy. One of the greatest drawbacks to a steady advancement of the pupils in our schools is the frequent change of teachers.

TEACHERS.—The schools in my district are mostly taught by male teachers in winter, and females in summer. Some three or four men make teaching a permanent employment, the remainder teach winters, and engage in other business during the summer. Their wages range from twelve to forty dollars per month. The lady teachers receive from one dollar fifty cents to three dollars per week and board.

We have held a few teachers' institutes in our county, and have attempted to hold more but failed. Teachers who teach in winter do so mostly for the pay, and if they can secure a school without attending an institute they will do so, and thus save themselves that expense. The same is true with the summer teachers. Institutes are usually held in the fall after the close of the summer schools, and young ladies having taught for small wages during the summer do not feel willing or able to spend the earnings of some two or three weeks to attend an institute. Teachers' associations have been held in a few towns with some success, and have resulted in good to the schools, the teachers of which have become interested in them.

TEACHERS' EXAMINATIONS.—It is my custom to appoint a day in each and every town, both spring and fall, for the examination of teachers. They are required to sustain an examination in all the branches before enumerated, and to exhibit tact and ability to teach. Few have ever attended to any work treating of the "theory and practice of teaching;" few have received a certificate of the first grade, except such as teach more or less during the entire year.

Nearly all the trustees like teachers of high qualifications, but are unwilling to pay them for their services. The number of Normal school graduates in my section of the county are few, and this is not to be wondered at; for after acquiring a good education as can be obtained in our Normal school, a man would be a fool, particularly if he loves money, if he should continue teaching in our district schools for the wages usually paid. It must be a love for the profession and a sense of duty that will keep him in the business. Lady graduates do not teach long; most young men like intelligent women for their wives, and hence our Normal graduates are not long finding husbands. The inducements for a man to qualify himself for a competent teacher are so small, that it is not to be wondered at that so few men make teaching a profession. Most

men calculate to settle down after obtaining their professions and live as others live; but for a teacher of a large majority of our district schools there is no chance to settle. He cannot often stay in one place longer than six months before a change is made, and he must look elsewhere for employment.

ACADEMIES.—There are two academies within my jurisdiction, both of which have had normal classes. Spencertown Academy has done nobly in preparing teachers for our district schools.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—I can see no diminution of the number of private schools since I commenced my term of office. Some of them are very well attended, others not so well.

SCHOOLS FOR COLORED CHILDREN.—The district school in Kinderhook has a branch for colored children, taught by a white young lady, kept in her father's house, and under the principalship and trusteeship of the district school.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—Some of the districts have excellent libraries, and take the best of care of them. The books are generally read. Others are careless about them, and take little or no interest in them. This is the case particularly with those districts where the library money is less than three dollars. In most of these districts they apply it to the payment of teachers' wages.

TRUSTEES.—A large number of our districts have adopted the one trustee system. Most of them like the change much. Some few have gone back from one to three trustees again; but will, as fast as they can, get back to one. That is a strange law that allows men to do just as their fancy dictates. The law ought to be restrictive.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.—The duties of a faithful school commissioner in a large district are manifold. Their labors, if conscientiously discharged, do an incalculable amount of good. Their frequent interviews with teachers, advising and encouraging them; their kind words and the noble incentives brought to bear upon the minds of the children; their meeting with the trustees and patrons of the different schools—all tend to promote harmony and advance the interests of the district schools, which, in my opinion, nothing else can be found to equal.

PETER I. PHILIP,

*School Commissioner.*

STUYVESANT, *December 22, 1862.*

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## CORTLAND COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

MARATHON, *December 4, 1862.*

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction :*

In compliance with the requirement of the Department to make a written report on the subject of "Public Instruction" within my jurisdiction, I respectfully submit the following :



STATISTICAL.—In the first commissioner district there are 93 school districts—one having been formed the past year. The whole number of children between the ages of four and twenty-one is 4,880. On the days of visitation during the winter term of 1861 and '62 there were enrolled on the teachers' books 2,322 pupils, and the number present was 1,688. Of these 182 were learning the alphabet, 2,140 were learning to read and spell, 912 were learning to write, 1,631 were studying arithmetic, 1,079 geography, 427 grammar, 213 analysis, 124 history of the United States, 97 algebra, 18 philosophy, and 21 physiology.

During the summer term of 1862, on the days of visitation, there were registered on the teachers' books 2,076 pupils, and the number present was 1,525. Of these there were 219 learning the alphabet, 1,856 were learning to read and spell, 724 were learning to write, 1,024 were studying arithmetic, 817 geography, 215 grammar, 178 analysis, 65 history, 14 algebra, 3 physiology, and 7 philosophy.

ATTENDANCE.—It will be observed that only about one-half of the pupils of school age have been in attendance during the past year. There are, comparatively, but few who attend the district school after the age of sixteen or seventeen. But few over the age of twelve attend during the summer term. The effect of rate-bills on attendance is unfavorable also—having a tendency to keep a lower grade of teachers in the schools, as the inhabitants in many districts are willing to pay little or nothing aside from the public money.

TEACHERS.—During the school year ending the 30th day of September, 1862, there were 160 different teachers employed in this district, showing that a large number of the schools change teachers each term. Of the teachers employed, but forty-three were males. Quite a large number of female teachers make teaching a permanent employment; but few males, however, are permanently engaged. The minimum wages of females the past year was \$1 per week, and of males \$9 per month, and board. The maximum wages of females was \$5 per week, and of males \$35 per month, including board. The standard of teachers' qualifications I believe to be higher than formerly. A large majority of the teachers attend the institute and associations. During the year there have been but one graduate and one undergraduate of the Normal school employed. A number of the graduates from this county are teaching in the city of Oswego, one in Albany, one in the New Jersey State Normal School, and others in various parts of the country—all, so far as known, being successful teachers. It is fully believed that the success, influence, and zeal for improvement of the graduates of the Normal school have had a most beneficial bearing on the cause of popular education, clearly vindicating the wisdom of the Legislature in permanently establishing this institution.

I have endeavored to exercise great care in licensing teachers, that the people might not be imposed upon by the unprincipled or incompetent,



believing that the commissioner is, to a considerable extent, responsible for the character of the schools under his jurisdiction. In ascertaining the qualifications of teachers, it has been my practice to subject them to a most thorough examination, by means of oral, written, and black-board exercises. A large majority of certificates granted have been of the second and third grades, and but very few of the first grade. In my opinion, a greater influence for good may be exerted over teachers by licensing them, as a general rule, for but one year at a time. By being subjected to an annual examination, they will be incited to greater attainments, and manifest more the spirit of the true teacher.

VISITATION OF SCHOOLS.—In the visitation of schools, the earnest, intelligent school officer can do much to awaken an interest among both patrons and pupils. It has been my custom to reach the district at an early hour, and to call on trustees and others, giving them pressing invitations to accompany me to the school room. In very many cases these invitations are gladly accepted, and the school room thronged with interested patrons. On these occasions the teacher's method of instruction and government is carefully observed, and if found to be deficient, such suggestions are made, and such practical demonstrations introduced, as will tend to remedy the defect and improve the condition of the school. I have visited each school once each term, and many of them twice.

SCHOOL HOUSES.—The school houses in this district are gradually improving, many of the old, dilapidated buildings having been removed, and more commodious structures erected in their places; yet there are, by far, too many school houses still standing as libels on the law of gravitation, and as monuments of a short-sighted penuriousness. I have urged upon trustees, continually, the importance of greater care in the selection of school house sites, and the propriety of enlarging and of ornamenting with trees and shrubbery those already possessed. I have been gratified to know that in many instances they have carried out these suggestions. So far as ventilation is concerned, I might remark that our country school houses, generally, are *self-ventilators*, and need but little attention in this respect; most of them, however, have facilities for lowering the upper sash of the windows. Teachers are carefully instructed to exercise great care in keeping the school room properly ventilated, and in a cleanly condition.

DISTRICT LIBRARIES.—The district libraries, apparently, are held in very slight estimation, being sadly neglected, and suffered to go to ruin. The books selected generally were suitable, and had they been properly cared for, would have been really valuable collections. In my opinion, the consolidation of the district libraries into town libraries, under proper regulations, would be the best means of rescuing them from entire destruction. In this way each town might be furnished with a library of great value, which, with the aid of the annual appropriation, might be made a rich mine of intelligence, and a blessing to the people.

**TRUSTEES.**—Of the 93 school districts, 57 have one trustee, and 36 have three. The prevailing sentiment seems to be favorable to the one trustee system. A large majority have complied with No. 116 of the Code.

**TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.**—The teachers' association of this county has been organized six years, the regular meetings of which are held quarterly, in various sections of the county. Special meetings are held oftener if deemed expedient. The association, the past year, has been largely attended both by teachers and parents. The proceedings consist of essays, discussions, addresses, and class exercises, in which teachers introduce classes of children from their respective schools. The association has been instrumental of much good, in awakening an interest on the subject of popular education.

**TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.**—The institute commenced October 20th, 1862, under the direction of the commissioners, assisted by an able corps of instructors and lecturers. The number of teachers in attendance was 250. The interest manifested, both by members and the public, was greater than at any former session. The personal effort of the commissioners, and the regulation of the Department authorizing them to grant certificates of attendance, doubtless had much to do in bringing together a large number. In the visitation of schools, I have never failed to find the beneficial influence of the institute most clearly developed; and I believe the public will continue to appreciate more and more this agency in promoting the interests of our common schools.

**ACADEMIES.**—There are two academies in this commissioner's district, both having been designated to instruct teachers' classes. Cortlandville academy, located at Cortland village, organized in the year 1842, is under the direction of Prof. Henry Carver, as principal, assisted by seven subordinate teachers, and is in a highly prosperous condition. The building is commodious, the library and apparatus ample. The average number of students the past year has been about 200. I consider the Regents wise in selecting this as one of the institutions wherein a teachers' class should be instructed.

Cincinnatus academy, organized in the year 1856, is finely located in the village of Cincinnatus, and is in a prosperous condition, having an average attendance of 80 students. The teachers' class in this institution has been efficiently and thoroughly instructed. These academies, through their teachers' classes, are exerting a healthful influence on the common schools.

**TEXT BOOKS.**—There are a great variety of text books used, since it has come to pass that nearly every teacher of but moderate pretensions considers it a duty to write a text book of some kind, and the publisher will leave no expedient untried to force the sale upon the people. All agree that the multitude of text books is a nuisance; but how to abate

it—that is the question. The books most generally used are Sanders' Speller, Analysis, and Series of Readers, Davies' Arithmetic and Algebra, Clark's Grammar, Brown's Grammar, McNally's Geography, Cutter's Physiology, and Monteith's History. The National Series of Readers, and Robinson's Mathematics, are used to some extent. Adams' Arithmetic is still used in some of the schools. The supply of apparatus is limited. Nearly all of the school houses are furnished with a black-board of some kind, but few have outline maps or globes.

REMARKS.—I consider it practicable to reduce our common schools to a graded system throughout, and that this would be one of the most effectual means of improving their condition.

Vocal music is practiced more or less in the schools of this district, and I think with favorable results. It is *taught* in very few, if any. A knowledge of vocal music is so desirable, and its influence upon individuals or a people so salutary, that it seems to deserve more attention in our educational system than it has heretofore received. Since there are a large number of teachers who cannot teach vocal music, it is suggested that it be made legal for several school districts to unite in employing a competent teacher of this branch, whose time should be equally divided among them.

Some of the larger schools find it necessary to employ two teachers at the same time during the winter term, but not during the summer term. The propriety of giving those districts that employ two teachers at the same time, for four months, one-half of an extra quota, is suggested.

I have endeavored to lose no opportunity to impress upon the minds of the people that they cannot place too high an estimate upon the value of our common schools, affording as they do ample facilities to all, however humble in birth or circumstances, for obtaining a thorough practical education; that they are important, the same as the sunshine, the air, or the rain—invaluable for their commonness; and that it is owing to the wide-spread diffusion of knowledge, disseminated by means of our common schools, that our country has stood at the head of the nations, in all that constitutes the elements of greatness.

DANIEL E. WHITMORE,

*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. Rice :

In the 90 schools under my supervision not one-half of the persons of school age, residing in the districts, are in attendance ; and although public opinion is against rate-bills, there are as many delinquents where there are no rate-bills as where there is money to be paid for tuition.

As to the character of school buildings, I have divided them into four classes : First class 30, second class 36, third class 22, fourth class 4.90.



The branches pursued, are reading, spelling, geography, mental and written arithmetic, English grammar, and in a few schools the history of the United States. The ages of those in attendance will average from 5 to 15 years.

The greatest want is efficient working teachers. Since the last report there have been engaged in these schools 114 females and 50 male teachers, and but a small portion of those make teaching a permanent business, but resort to it more as a temporary employment.

I have also divided the teachers into three classes, according to their earnestness and success, viz : Females, 13 of the first class, 99 of the second class, and 2 of the third class ; of males, 10 of the first class, 36 of the second, and 4 of the third class.

Our institutes in the fall of 1861 and 1862 have proved a success ; and the patrons of schools are fast opening their eyes to the fact ; sending the trustees to the institute to obtain their teachers. This fall there were probably ten teachers engaged to one in any former year at the institute.

As to the character of the examination to which I subject the teachers, I follow suggestion in the Code, page 167, as I can find no better plan.

The Cortland academy is situated in the town of Homer; for their statistics, see report of that institution.

There are but two private schools in this district, to my knowledge ; and I cannot tell how they compare with former years. No parochial schools or schools for colored children; no union free schools.

The condition of the libraries is not very flattering, for they are not held in very high estimation by the reading public ; and it is perhaps partly owing to the great number of newspapers and periodicals, daily and weekly issued from the press, which take up most of the time set apart for reading.

In this comr's district there are 33 school districts that elect but one trustee. Some have, after trying the one trustee system several years, returned to the old plan of three. So the question of the best plan is not yet decided, there being so much diversity of opinion on that subject.

The last session of our institute was held in Homer for eleven days. I herewith send you a copy of report, in which you will see the teachers names, and also the lecturers and their subjects. Our associations are highly beneficial to the educational interest of our county. For the last year we have had a full attendance, and a great interest manifested, not only among the teachers but also among the people.

The labors performed by me in district No. 2, Cortland county, are as follows : 223 half-day visits ; I have attended two examinations in each town, several at my place of residence; have met my colleague several times on special business; attended comr's convention at Albany; mad the abstract of trustees' report, &c., &c. Respectfully,

LYMAN PIERCE.

## DELAWARE COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

DELHI, Dec. 25, 1862.

Hon. V. M. RICE:

Dear Sir—In compliance with your request, I submit the following report:

There are in the first Assembly district of this county 190 common schools, 3 academies, and 10 private schools. For attendance and non-attendance see my report of the 15th ult.

The rate-bills have had the effect to prevent many from attending school, make the attendance irregular, and in some districts, I am sorry to say, schools have been in session only long enough to exhaust the public moneys. I think that public opinion disapproves of rate-bills.

Of the school houses about one-third are neat and commodious, with pleasant sites and appropriate out-buildings. The furniture is modern. About one-third are in a very comfortable condition, but are poorly furnished. The remainder are in a very poor condition. They are warmed by stoves, and are ventilated by lowering the windows.

The text books are Parker and Watson's Readers and Speller, Clark's Grammar, Monteith and McNally's Geography, Thomson's Higher and Practical Arithmetics, and Stoddard's Intellectual Arithmetic.

The age at which pupils usually commence attending school is five years, and they are allowed to be in school till about the age of fourteen. A serious evil that affects the grade of public schools is the promotion of pupils to the academies before they are prepared for such promotion.

While nearly every other public or private interest in our county has suffered, to a greater or less extent, by this unparalleled rebellion, our common schools have continued to improve, enjoying as they do, and have done, the confidence of the public.

The proportion of male teachers to female teachers is as about one to three; of the number that follow teaching as a permanent employment, I may safely say one-half. The wages of the females are about \$3 per week in the summer, and \$4 per week in the winter. The males receive about \$20 per month and board. Their attendance at the institute has surpassed, so far as I am able to learn, any other county in the State, being at our last institute *four hundred and thirty*. I consider the teachers well qualified to teach all the branches usually pursued in our common schools.

I have granted during this year 50 first grade certificates, 200 second grade certificates, and 40 third grade.

There are no Normal school graduates teaching in this district.

The estimation in which the district school libraries are held by the people is at a low ebb, and the condition and character of the libraries is in a poor state.

The number of school districts that have one trustee is 100.

Nearly all of the trustees have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

The institute was in session twelve days.

During the past year I have made four hundred visitations in the schools of my district. I have never been able to visit all the schools in one term, because there are more schools than half days. I hold a teachers' drill in each town, in the months of April and November, at which places teachers are licensed. I devote my entire time to the duties of my office.

Respectfully submitted.

A. D. KNAPP,

*School Commissioner.*

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## DUTCHESS COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

EAST FISHKILL, *December 28, 1862.*

VICTOR M. RICE, *Sup't Public Instruction :*

Dear Sir—In the country districts almost every one attends school at the proper age; small children in summer, large in winter. In the village districts there is a large class that do not attend school at all.

School houses have not changed for the better. The people generally in my district adhere to their old customs.

Children begin their attendance at from four to six, and end at from twelve to seventeen years of age.

The most urgent want in my district is that trustees should use some judgment in selection of teachers. They get in the habit in a district of paying a certain amount for teachers' wages; the result is, chance more than the qualification regulates the teacher's wages.

The teachers in summer are nearly all females; in winter nearly all males. Not over twenty follow teaching as a permanent employment.

I examine once a year in classes—one in each town. My certificates are mostly second grade. I have a few Normal teachers, and they are exerting a very good influence in advancing the standard of our common schools.

There has been a decrease in family schools in the past two years.

ACADEMIES.—I am not able to give you much information in regard to these. I can only judge from the teachers I have examined. They are not practical in their system of instruction.

There is only one school for colored children; in all other districts they attend with the other children. They are apt scholars.

Only one free school.

District libraries are of no value. Their place seems to be supplied with the daily and weekly papers. Not over ten libraries in my district



are taken care of at all. I consider the money used for books nearly wasted. Very few buy any more books; they use their money for teachers' wages.

About one-third of the districts have one trustee.

Last year we held an institute in Poughkeepsie; very poorly attended from the country districts. This year it seemed the prevailing opinion, on account of the times, that we had better not have one. Many of our most earnest teachers have enlisted in the army. The war has taken nearly all of our large children out of our schools, to supply the places of older brothers gone to the army.

Yours, &c.

AUGUSTUS A. BRUSH,  
*School Commissioner.*

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### ERIE COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

HON. VICTOR M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

Sir—In addition to the abstracts of statistics required by the Department, the undersigned respectfully submits the following report :

The first commissioner's district of Erie county consists of the eight north towns of said county, viz.: Alden, Amherst, Clarence, Chictawauga, Grand Island, Lancaster, Newstead, and Tonawanda.

There are in this district ninety-one school districts, the school houses of which are located within the district. Several applications have been made during the past year for the formation of new districts, but I have refused to consent to organize districts except in one instance, where the extent of territory embraced, the population, and the urgent necessity for the construction of school buildings seemed to require it. The number of districts has been increased by the formation of a new one from portions of No. 4 and No. 5 of the town of Chictawauga.

With few exceptions, the school districts in this commissioner's district have population and wealth sufficient to maintain their organizations, and support a school for the time required by the statute creditably, and without an expense disproportionate to the advantages which should be derived therefrom.

SCHOOL HOUSES.—By reference to the statistical report, it will be seen that there are ninety-four school houses in this district. Five of these were built during the past year, and are characterized by a decided improvement in the construction and appurtenances on the most of school buildings in this district. I refer with special pleasure to the house erected in the new district in Chictawauga above referred to. It is a spacious brick structure, constructed upon the most approved principles, and built at a cost, together with site, out-houses, and other appurte-

nances, of \$1,700. The interest manifested by the enterprising friends of education in this district is deserving of favorable mention. If there is anything which determines the degree of interest manifested by the people in relation to the education of their children, it is the condition of the school houses. While in some districts these buildings are in a commendable condition, I regret to say that the most of them exhibit a negligence that does not appear in the attention given to the out-houses of a thrifty farmer. Many of them are located on small and otherwise useless corner lots, where, without fences or worse than none, they are left exposed to the encroachments of every stray animal of the vicinity. There is as yet but little appearance of that taste and refinement exhibited in the school houses and appurtenances which characterize a people whose chief interest is the education and cultivation of their children.

APPARATUS.—But few of the districts are in possession of suitable school apparatus. Excepting a blackboard there is little else to illustrate the various branches of study which are pursued. Some of them have recently, by consent of the inhabitants, appropriated the library money to the purchase of French's map and gazetteer of this State; Webster's dictionary is also quite uniformly found in the schools.

TEXT-BOOKS.—Notwithstanding the efforts made by school officers from time immemorial to obviate the diversity of text-books used in the schools, the difficulty remains as formidable as ever, if not more so. To obtain uniformity in the same school is all that can be expected or desired in the country, where removals from one district to another are not common; but owing to the semi-annual changes of teachers, each of whom has some favorite author, and more particularly perhaps to the efforts and competition of book publishers and their agents, this is as yet far from being accomplished. I am of the opinion, however, that the diversity of text-books, while producing some minor evils, is on the whole promotive of a healthy advance in our educational system. It would certainly not be desirable to retain a text-book always for the sake of uniformity, and it would be impossible to effect changes at once, when a change becomes necessary. It is therefore as well to leave this subject to those influences which regulate competition, and which always compel the good to yield to the superiority of the better, and the better to the superlative potency of the best. It has proved itself to be beyond the power of regulation by any influence which has yet been brought to bear upon it, and notwithstanding this want of submission to arbitrary mandates and restrictions, the text-books that are now in use are far superior to those which were in use when the subject of uniformity was first broached. When considerable periods of time are regarded, the comparative merits of text-books may be a subject of some importance, but of contemporaneous publications it is really a matter of almost entire insignificance. At least, not of sufficient importance to cause any very great preference for one or the other text-book upon the same subject.

The most recent claimants to public favor and patronage are the following text-books : Parker and Watson's national series of Readers, McNally's and Monteath's Geographies, Clark's Grammar, Davies' Mathematics.

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOLS.—The reports of the trustees, relating to the attendance at the schools, are so unreliable that it is impossible to state, with any approach to exactness, the number who attend the schools. To what extent the rate-bill prevents attendance it is also impossible to say. That among some classes of citizens it is a very serious objection to pay anything for the support of schools it is useless to deny. It is my opinion, that the expense of supporting the public schools would be as equitably and justly distributed by a return to that system of free schools, which received so inadequate a trial under the school act of 1849.

TEACHERS.—By reference to the table of statistics it will be seen that, of the teachers, much the larger proportion are females. The most of these follow the occupation summer and winter. The number of male teachers is gradually diminishing from year to year, and those who do teach follow the occupation only for the winter season. I regret to say, that, as a class, they are not so well qualified as the majority of the teachers of the other sex. This is due in no small degree to the disadvantages which must obtain from a diversion of their minds, for a great part of the time, to other occupations.

Most of the female teachers are employed from six to eight months of the year, and their wages average, I think, about fourteen dollars a month. About twenty-five dollars per month is the average amount paid male teachers when employed.

The teachers of this district, as a class, are very ready to respond to the claims of the teachers' association, or county institute, when they do not involve an expenditure of time and money beyond what their inadequate wages will justify.

If there is any department in which teachers fail to fulfill their duty, it is that which relates to primary instruction. But a gradual improvement is being made in this respect, and many of them are already quite familiar with the practical application of the Pestalozzian method, and are doing good service in promulgating its claims.

At least nine-tenths of all certificates granted by me have been of the second grade, the remaining tenth being of the first and third. Comparatively few of the latter have been granted, as I have refused nearly all applicants whose qualifications did not merit the second grade.

I am very happy to state that there is already a large number of teachers, and they are constantly increasing, who constitute the *esprit du corps*, and whose professional energy and zeal are exerting a favorable influence upon the schools, and awakening in the minds of the people where they are employed a degree of interest which redounds much to



their praise, and cannot but stimulate to higher endeavor and result in much good.

ACADEMIES.—There are two academies in this district, one located at Clarence Hollow, the other at Williamsville. Both of these institutions are fine brick structures of modern design, the former built at a cost of about six thousand dollars, the latter at a cost of ten thousand dollars. The former is under the visitation of the Board of Regents; the latter, having not yet complied with the necessary preliminary requirements, is not subject to their visitation.

The Clarence academy has a very excellent philosophical apparatus, also the nucleus of a library, consisting of several hundred volumes.

The branches of study pursued at these institutions are such as constitute the curriculum of an academic course, consisting of the ancient and modern languages, higher mathematics, belle lettres, &c.

Although a teachers' class has been taught at the former of these institutions but part of the time since their existence, they have both exerted an enduring influence in preparing many of the teachers for pursuing more effectually their vocation. The number of students in attendance fluctuates so much from year to year, that it is impossible to state the average attendance in the absence of any statistics upon the subject. Both of them, however, considering their proximity, are well patronized and creditably sustained.

PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.—I am unable to report the number of private and parochial schools in this district, and the number of pupils in attendance at them. My attention has not been directed towards them, and the information that I have been able to derive concerning them from the reports of the trustees is too meagre to be useful. I am of the impression, however, that there are not so many of the former as in previous years, owing to the improved character of the common schools. There are some localities, however, where a portion of the community will insist upon patronizing them, for the reason that they do not consider the common school sufficiently exclusive for their children.

The parochial schools are nearly all under the patronage of the Catholic domination, from which they claim and obtain patronage and support.

LIBRARIES.—I have not bestowed very much personal attention to the libraries, either school or private, in this district. I am able to say, however, that the regulations concerning the school libraries are but indifferently observed, and that in many of the districts they are sadly neglected. Many of these libraries contain valuable works, together with much of that trashy and ephemeral literature which is not the best nourishment for the mind.

Their utility seems, however, to be almost entirely supplanted by the cheapness of books and periodicals, which enables almost every person to purchase all the reading matter which he has leisure to read. Besides, in many instances, the collection of books belonging to the dis-

trict affords but a poor source for the gratification of an appetite for choice and instructive works.

From a cursory examination of these libraries in some large districts, I have been very forcibly impressed with the opinion that, notwithstanding the reported expenditure of the money for books, they do not appear to increase proportionately in size. If the money is expended, as reported, for books, why are there no more volumes than there were five years ago? There must certainly be great negligence manifested by the librarians, or the money is perverted to some other use.

TRUSTEES.—Many of the districts have adopted the provision of the school law, which authorizes only one trustee. Some that adopted it have returned to the old system. In small districts, where there are but few conflicting interests to subserve, and but little labor for the trustees to perform, one trustee seems to answer the purpose and to facilitate the business better than three; but in villages and large districts an adherence to the old system of three is, in my opinion, preferable.

I am not able to report the number of districts whose trustees have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of "the Code of Public Instruction." From the imperfect character of the reports, it would appear that but few of them have done so.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.—The Erie county teachers' institute was held at Williamsville in November, and continued twelve days. The exercises were conducted by James Cruikshank, LL. D., of Albany. These consisted of a review and elucidation of those subjects which are generally taught in common schools. Limited periods of time were each day assigned to arithmetic (mental and written), geography, grammar, reading, orthography, and also to illustration of the Pestalozzian system of instruction.

Evening lectures were given by the following named persons on the subjects following their names: Rev. William Waith, of Lancaster, "Self Respect;" Byron Pratt, ex-commissioner, "Proper Order of Studies;" Rev. David Copeland, Springville, "Man—His Dwelling Place;" Emerson C. Pomroy, Buffalo, "Education—Its Relation to Government;" J. B. Sackett, Buffalo, "The School and the Teacher." Also two lectures by the conductor on "Physical Geography."

Nearly two hundred different teachers were present during the whole or part of the session, and much interest was manifested by them.

The lectures were also attended by many of the citizens, and they too exhibited a degree of interest which entitles them to much praise.

In the performance of the duties pertaining to the office of school commissioner, there have been many obstacles to encounter since the supervision of schools came under the jurisdiction of the present officers.

The excitement and confusion, incident to the great national peril, have in no small degree diverted the minds of the people from the schools, and directed their attention and energies to the all-absorbing

question of the preservation of the government, upon which the perpetuity and prosperity of our educational system in no slight degree depend. Many of the best teachers, here as well as elsewhere, have enlisted to serve their country in its hour of trial.

I have visited nearly all the schools in this district twice, and some of them three times during the past year. The scarcity of laborers has compelled almost every person in the rural districts to rely upon themselves for the performance of farm labor, and it has therefore been but seldom that I have been able to secure the presence of trustees or others at these visitations.

It has been my object to influence the prosperity of the schools much more by instructions to the teachers, by suggestions and hints relating to the conduct of schools, and the most approved methods of imparting instruction, than by depending entirely upon the official visitations, the benefits of which, in my estimation, are too much overrated, unless they can be made to occur much oftener than is generally the case, or than the extent of territory, or the number of schools under the jurisdiction of most commissioners will admit. On the whole, a comparison of the present condition of the schools with that of former years indicates a healthy progress, and affords no reason for discouragement to the friends of education.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

DAVID W. HERSHEY,  
*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

I have the honor to submit the following report :

Of the entire number of persons of school age in my district, sixty-four and one-half per cent have been under instruction during some portion of the year. The average period of school in the several districts has been a little more than seven months. While in a very large number of districts school has been maintained only for the time requisite to a participation in the school fund of the State, yet very many, by a liberal and enlightened policy in reference to the character and abilities of the teachers employed, have maintained schools during eight, nine, and ten months, thereby being enabled to extend the range of studies, and thus afford the means of instruction to many who must otherwise have sought it elsewhere.

In reference to the rate-bill system, I am compelled to believe that, in many localities, its effect is injurious to a higher grade of intelligence, and therefore prejudicial to the best interests of the schools. You will perceive that a large number of districts report nothing raised by rate-bills; or, if any, a very small amount, which, with the money appor-



oned, is entirely inadequate to the maintenance of a good school, and barely sufficient to supply the physical wants of the teachers. In my official intercourse with the schools, I have found that the levying of a rate-bill keeps many a child away from the advantages of the school room. Viewing my entire district as a unit, the belief is forced upon me that its *tendency* is poor schools, poorly attended, with teachers very inadequately paid.

The condition of the school houses exerts, in my judgment, a very important influence upon the condition and character of our schools. There is a slow but perceptible progress in this direction in my district. Old, time-worn buildings are being gradually supplanted by convenient and comfortable ones, with good playgrounds, and both desirably located. A few of these have been erected since my last annual report.

Of the teachers employed during the year, thirty-two per cent. were males, and sixty-eight per cent. were females. The average compensation per month for the former was about \$18, for the latter about \$12. Owing to the constant change of teachers—few, comparatively, being retained in a school for the second term—the occupation loses, in many respects, the character of a profession; a very few, only, making the business of teaching their constant employment. To raise the standard of qualifications, and thereby proportionately elevate the character of the schools, has been my constant endeavor. By the holding of associations in various parts of my district, and by other means, I am striving to awaken a professional love and zeal which show themselves in an increased devotion to the cause of education, in a more thorough appreciation of the wants of our schools, and in an earnest desire to remedy, so far as practicable, the existing evils.

Among the most efficient and capable instructors, I recognize the few Normal graduates who have been employed during the year. I find in their schools, usually, a better classification, more system, and a more thorough comprehension of the various branches taught. Until trustees thoroughly awake to the true policy of hiring the best teachers, and paying them adequately for their labors, I despair of reaping, except in a very few of the most populous districts, the advantages of the culture and discipline to be acquired at the Normal school.

The number of private schools and pupils in attendance is, I think, slightly in excess of last year. In one or two localities schools of this kind have been in operation for two or three months, to enable teachers to review their studies before entering upon their winter's labors, and hence were of a transitory nature; in some others they have assumed a permanent character.

There is annually expended for books for the different libraries, the sum of \$200 and over. I have long been of the opinion that, so far as my district is concerned, the appropriation had better be withheld. If I mistake not, the number of volumes in the several libraries, as reported

each successive year, varies but little, sometimes showing an actual decrease, although many dollars had been expended in the purchase of books. I am persuaded that there is really no practical benefit resulting from this annual expenditure. The libraries receive usually little attention; the books are often selected without reference to the wants of the district, and hence are seldom opened with an earnest desire for improvement. Whatever importance school district libraries may have assumed in the earlier history of common schools in our State, I am of the opinion that they are rapidly going into disuse, and thus fail of accomplishing their mission in the intellectual advancement of the masses. Our people generally find their reading in the daily and weekly issues of the press, and have little time or inclination for other publications. I think I can see evidences of a deeper interest in our common schools on the part of parents and guardians generally. It is to be seen also in the growing desire of teachers for professional instruction, and, consequently, in an increasing attendance upon institutes and associations. I should be false to the responsible position I occupy, did I not endeavor to call out a more healthy action, to awaken a more lively interest, and to remind the people of their obligations in view of what the State is doing annually for the education and discipline of her children. This I regard as the duty of all, but more especially of those who stand as the exponents of the common school interest of our State. I find that the labors and duties of the commissioner are not few; that the position requires in its incumbent, sound judgment, and at heart the education and elevation of the masses. The field is broad, and the opportunities abundant for the exercise of that efficiency which the system so much requires. In addition to the usual visitations, the preparation of reports, the issuing of circulars, the formation and alteration of school districts, the annual institutes and semi-annual associations, the settling of district controversies, and the semi-annual examinations of teachers, all leave but little time unemployed.

Very respectfully,

T. J. POWERS,

*School Commissioner.*

HAMBURGH, Dec. 2, 1862.

### THIRD DISTRICT.

GOWANDA, N. Y., Nov. 10, 1862.

HON. V. M. RICE, *Sup't Public Instruction* :

Sir—The undersigned school commissioner for the third district of the county of Erie, comprising the towns of Boston, Brandt, Colden, Collins, Concord, Holland and Sardinia, respectfully submits the following report:

The number of school districts in the above towns is 97. The number of children of school age is 5,726. Seventy-one per cent of this number

have attended common school during a part of the last school year. The number of children reported is larger than that reported the previous year, while the number in attendance at school is four per cent less. This is probably owing to the scarcity of help in the rural districts, which has compelled parents to retain at home those children whose labor could be made available on the farm. The average number of months school has been in session is very nearly seven.

The public sentiment in regard to rate-bills is practically illustrated by comparing the amounts thus raised, year after year, with one another. By thus comparing, I find that the amount has decreased in the last three years *thirty-one per cent*. There seems to be a growing determination on the part of most school districts to expend for teachers' wages but little, if any, more than the amount of money received for that purpose from the State.

I regret to report that at least two-fifths of the school houses in this district are wholly unfit for school purposes. They were built years ago, upon poorly located sites, without reference either to the beauty or convenience of the location. The seats are badly arranged, and are uncomfortable and inconvenient for scholars and teachers, while but little, and in most cases, no attention has been paid to proper ventilation.—The people have made rapid advancement in wealth, intelligence, and refinement; costly private residences, beautiful and commodious, are being erected, while those built to take the place of the log cabin, and which were considered comfortable dwellings a few years since, are being torn down. In the midst of this general improvement in dwellings and out-buildings, there are but few communities in which "the old school house" is *disturbed*. It remains—a relic of the past, unsightly to the passer by, unattractive to the children, and *discouraging* to the teacher.

The supply of school apparatus is limited. Every school house, with two exceptions, has a black-board, most of them are supplied with maps of various kinds, and a few are in possession of a globe and a set of outline maps. The branches of study usually taught, and the text books used, of which there is generally a fair supply, are as follows: Orthography, Wright; reading and spelling, Town; grammar, Brown and Clark; geography, McNally; arithmetic, mental and written, Davies and Thomson; algebra, Davies; physiology, Cutter.

During the past year there were 168 different teachers employed in the schools under my supervision, of whom 52 only were males. Thirty-eight had never taught before, and the remaining 130 had taught from three months to two years each. The number of male teachers has decreased in the last three years twenty-three per cent., and there has been a corresponding increase in the wages of female teachers. During the past year the average wages of female teachers is *very nearly* six dollars per month in summer, and ten dollars in winter, inclusive of



board. I take great pleasure in testifying to the marked improvement made by teachers in this district in the two preceding years, not only in their educational qualification, but in their ability and aptness to teach. There are more teachers who study *how* to teach, and who are constantly striving to improve their faculties to illustrate and explain. It is in this particular that I find teachers the most deficient, and hence any improvement in this direction is very gratifying.

I have granted but few first grade certificates, and the time of the second grade rarely extends beyond a year's duration; and to those who undertake the business of teaching for the first time, I invariably issue a third grade for six months. The grade of certificate granted a teacher, should be not simply an index of his *educational* acquirements, but of his *ability to instruct and manage a school*. A change in the form of certificates, so as to indicate the teacher's standing, in each of the studies in which he is examined, together with his aptness to teach, and his success in the management of a school, would be of advantage to the trustee in making an engagement with a teacher. The last item should be filled by the commissioner, regulated by his observation of the teacher in the school-room. My examinations are partly written and partly oral. Whenever practicable, each teacher is sent to the blackboard and required to solve and explain problems in arithmetic, write exercises in grammar, &c. In addition to the usual examination, to ascertain the teacher's knowledge of the branches of study usually taught in common schools, I have a thorough drill in regard to the organization and arrangement of classes; and I endeavor to learn if the teacher has any well-defined method of conducting recitations and school exercises, and of disciplining the school; in short, if he has any knowledge of the practical details of teaching. I receive from every teacher during the third week of each term of school a written report, containing information relative to the programme of exercises which he has arranged, the number of pupils in each class, and the time he devotes to each recitation; and in addition a general report, as to the condition of the school, the supply of text-books, and the interest manifested by his patrons in the school. These reports are arranged in order for reference.

The teachers' institute, for the county of Erie, was held at Springville, in the third district, in the month of October, 1861. The success of this institute was very gratifying. The exercises were conducted by James Cruikshank, LL. D.; and the evenings were devoted to lectures by men of culture and educational ability. One hundred and eighty teachers were in attendance, of whom one hundred and thirty were residents of the third commissioner's district. Of this number sixty-seven have been engaged in teaching during the past year in my official jurisdiction, and a number of others elsewhere. At my suggestion a teachers' association, for this district, was organized at the time of the institute, and has been in session twice since. Eighty teachers were present at

each session, and a lively interest manifested in the exercises by the teachers and the spectators present.

The advantages which the common school teachers in this section derive from the course of instruction received at the Springville academy, and the consequent benefits conferred upon the common schools, cannot be too highly estimated. During the fall term a teachers' class is organized, which usually consists of from forty to fifty members. This class recites daily, taking a thorough review of the common English branches, and is under the immediate charge of the principal, Rev. David Copeland, from whom the class receives frequent lectures on the "theory and practice of teaching." There have been registered this present term one hundred and fifty-six students, whose tuition ranges from four to six dollars each, according to the studies which they pursue. The sources of support received by this institution, in addition to the tuition of students, are the sums annually received for the instruction of the usual number of common school teachers, and the appropriation from the Literature Fund. The academy building is old and needs remodeling; it will, however, compare very favorably with two-thirds of the buildings used for the same purpose throughout the State. It is well furnished with maps, globes, astronomical and physiological charts, a good philosophical apparatus, and a library.

The private schools in this district are mostly of a temporary character, continuing in session for a few weeks only, during the vacation of common schools, in the fall. There are eleven schools of this kind now in session, with an attendance of two hundred and sixty-nine pupils. These schools are in most cases taught by experienced teachers, and exert a wholesome influence.

District school libraries are in a very poor condition generally, and are almost altogether unmolested. The current literature of the day—the periodical, weekly and daily newspaper—take the place of the school library, the books of which, years ago, were eagerly sought for. The number of books in these libraries, in this official jurisdiction, has decreased *thirty-one* per cent in the last three years, and the amount of money annually expended in the purchase of books has decreased in the same time fifty per cent. At least two-thirds of the money appropriated for the purchase of books is paid for teachers' wages. If this money is to be paid for instruction, would it not be a wise policy to employ it for the instruction of teachers, and for their better preparation to discharge their professional duties?

Two-thirds of the school districts in this official jurisdiction elect only one trustee. Of the whole number, perhaps one-half comply with No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

During the last school year, ending September 30, 1862, the undersigned made 180 official visits to the schools under his supervision, examined 180 teachers, 150 of whom received certificates, held two ses-

sions of the teachers' association of the third district, and assisted in the preparation for and the organization of a teachers' institute for the county of Erie. An active discharge of the duties pertaining to the office of school commissioner leaves very little leisure time, and that at intervals only. In addition to the above detail of labor, are the following duties: apportioning the school moneys to the several school districts under his supervision; collecting and *correcting* the trustees' reports, and making therefrom the annual report to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction; the alteration of school districts; and replying to inquiries from trustees and teachers. The time is occupied nearly as follows: Visiting schools, seven months; general duties, such as alteration of school districts, answering inquiries, holding associations, &c., one month; examination of teachers, one month; collecting trustees' reports, and making the annual apportionment of school moneys, and reports to State Superintendent, and holding teachers' institute, two months.

In conclusion, the undersigned would express his conviction that at no time in the history of our country has there been greater need of active, faithful, conscientious teachers and school officers than at the present. Every eye is turned, as it were, in the direction of our armies; every heart throbs with emotion as the news of some impending battle flashes along the electric wire; and in the midst of this one great absorbing interest, there is danger that our common schools shall be neglected. Teachers, commissioners, and superintendents of schools must labor faithfully and earnestly in their behalf, although for the time being their services may receive only a partial recognition and appreciation.

Yours, respectfully,

HENRY S. STEBBINS,

*School Commissioner.*

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## ESSEX COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

*December, 1862.*

*To the Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

The attendance of persons of school age is a little over two-thirds only of the whole number—thus, in 1860, out of 6,017 persons between the ages of four and twenty-one, 4,278 attended school; in 1861, the whole number was 6,042, of which 4,188 attended school; in 1862, the whole number was 5,938, and 4,213 attended school. I think one, and perhaps the principal reason why more do not attend, is owing to the fear of a rate-bill. Indeed, there appears to be a disposition, on the part of districts and trustees, to avoid a rate-bill, if possible, by engaging teachers in such a way as to just use up the public money in six months. In 1860, there were 95 school districts in this commissioner



district, and only 62 raised money by rate-bill; in 1861, there were 97 districts, of which 56 only raised money by rate-bill; and in 1862, there were 99 districts, 57 of which raised money by rate-bill.

The general character and condition of the school houses is about as bad as could well be conceived. A very large number of them are old and sadly out of repair. They are badly situated, either in or very near the highway, with no out-houses, or only mere apologies for them; their furniture, if any, of the simplest kind—a blackboard, and perhaps a “rickety” chair. They are all warmed by stoves, most of which are older than that distinguished personage, “the oldest inhabitant;” and many of them are ventilated only by such ventilators as the “lapse of time and the ruthless hand of ignorance” have made. A few are supplied with school apparatus, such as globes, maps, and charts, to a limited extent, but by far the greater number have nothing of the kind. Text-books are furnished by the parents very generally, though in nearly every school one or more pupils have none at all. The branches of study most generally pursued are spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar, and algebra. Occasionally I have found a school in which history and book-keeping were studied, but they are very few. In some three or four I have found geometry, trigonometry, and Latin, as branches of study. I very much regret that intellectual arithmetic does not occupy that place in our schools as a branch of study which I think its importance demands. I have endeavored to dissuade both teachers and pupils from the introduction of algebra as a branch of study in our schools to the exclusion of other and more important *practical* studies (for a common school education)—as, for instance, intellectual arithmetic.

The age at which pupils begin their attendance is about five years, and they end their attendance, upon an average, at about the age of fifteen years—the whole time they are allowed to attend school during these ten years will average not far from three and one-half years of continuous school.

During the past two years, which is all the time of which I can speak from experience, I think the schools generally have made some *little* progress and improvement. True, it is but little compared with what it should be, or what is absolutely necessary to make them what they were designed for—the education of the people—still I think teachers and parents generally, from year to year, appreciate more fully the importance of elevating our common schools and making them more practical. Their most urgent wants are some means of still farther arousing the people to their vital importance, of creating in them some degree of interest in the welfare of their children, both physically and mentally; a more rigid and thorough exercise of the duties of the commissioner, particularly in the examination of teachers; and last, but not least, they urgently want, in *allopathic* doses, what they now get in diminutive *homeopathic* potencies, “*active, efficient, live*” teachers.

The proportion of male to female teachers is about one to three, and of those who follow teaching as a permanent and as a temporary employment, the proportion does not exceed, I think, one to twenty. Most of the teachers devote but about five or six years to teaching, and then only in the summer and winter—say three to four months each. The wages of females in summer will average about \$1.50 per week; in winter about \$2.75 per week. The wages of males, who, with one or two exceptions, teach only in the winter, will average about eighteen dollars per month. Owing to the fact that but few institutes have been held in this county, the attendance has not been very large, even upon those that have been held. Another reason for this, as well as why no more institutes have been held, is the extent of territory (about 1,925 square miles) which is covered by the county—being, with one exception, the largest in the State, and the scattered condition of its inhabitants thus rendering it extremely difficult for teachers from the remote parts to meet together. There is not any organized association of teachers in my district.

The examinations to which I subject the teachers I aim to make thorough—very rarely occupying less time than three hours, and are conducted orally. The branch of study which I find them best prepared to teach, generally, is written arithmetic; next comes geography, then grammar, writing, reading, and spelling. Too many of them are better prepared, perhaps, to teach—or, rather, try to—algebra than anything else, though they are far from being *perfect* in this. By far the greater number are sadly deficient in a knowledge of the first principles of most of the branches of study, but particularly so in reading and spelling. Very few have heretofore taken any special care or pains to qualify themselves for the duties of their profession by studying any work on the “Theory and Practice of Teaching.” In fact, I am satisfied some of them never heard of such a work until quite recently. I hope, however, this cannot be said much longer, for there appears to be a disposition, on the part of teachers, to ascertain what their duties are, and the best means of fulfilling them. A majority of the certificates annually granted by me have been those of the second grade, with quite a large number of the third, and very few of the first grade—only five in two years.

Too many of our schools, paying very little attention to qualifications, engage the teacher who will keep <sup>in</sup> school the cheapest, or whom it will take the least money to pay at the close of the term; consequently the demand for teachers of high qualifications is not great, nor is there a very large supply. At present there is not, to my knowledge, any Normal school graduate or undergraduate employed in this district.

There is no academy in the first commissioner district in this county—Keeseville Academy being situated in Clinton county, though it is usually considered an Essex county institution; and as such is designated by the Regents of the University for the instruction of common school

teachers in this county. The number of students will average not far from sixty, of which nearly one-half are under the age of fifteen. The buildings consist of a two-story brick academy, and the out-houses. The library is not very extensive; it has a small and incomplete chemical and philosophical apparatus. The branches of study generally pursued are the common English branches, the higher English or mathematics, and the ancient and modern languages. The wages of the teachers depend upon the number of pupils—there being no fund or endowment. The rates of tuition correspond with those of similar institutions in this State, varying from three to six or seven dollars for a term of fourteen weeks. I do not think the teachers' classes have been of that practical benefit to the common schools which was anticipated until within the past year or two, owing mainly, no doubt, to the manner in which they were conducted. I am happy to say this objection does not hold good under the present teachers, and I am confident better results may be anticipated.

The number of private schools during the past year has been nine. These, with some three or four exceptions, have been held during the fall months, and do not in any way, I think, come in contact or competition with our common schools. Their number is less than in former years by nearly one-half, so also has been the attendance, the number this year being 182, while in some former years it has been about 350.

As a general thing the district school libraries are not in a very good condition, the books having been read and re-read become soiled, worn, and in many instances lost. Additions, particularly among the smaller districts, are made at long intervals; hence, with the disposition to use and read them, which exists in most of the districts, it is nearly or quite impossible to keep them in good condition. They are mainly made up of historical works, biographies, travels, &c., with occasionally a work of a scientific character, and quite generally are held in high estimation by the people.

Quite a large number of families are supplied with newspapers, many with periodicals, while very few have private libraries to any considerable extent; these, however, such as they are, are generally freely circulated among the people, thus forming a taste and habit for reading which the school library tends to keep up, and creating a demand for the different works it contains.

The sentiment of the people appears to be, in favor of having but one trustee; this is shown in the fact that very nearly two-thirds of the districts have one trustee only, whose duties are mainly confined to hiring teachers as cheap as they can. Very few have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction, except so far as to have a blank book for the purpose of keeping their accounts with the district.

A teachers' institute was held at Elizabethtown, in the month of



November last, which continued ten working days, and was mainly under the charge of Prof. Ira W. Allen, of Albany. Prof. J. Madison Watson, of New York city, was employed two days to give instruction in elocution and calisthenics. Dr. Cruikshank, of Albany, visited the institute, and remained only half a day, during which time he gave some valuable instruction upon a variety of topics, particularly upon teaching intellectual arithmetic, geography, and upon the method of teaching by object lessons. During the institute, thorough instruction was given in arithmetic, both intellectual and written, geography, grammar, reading and spelling, and the science of government. Prof. Potter, of New York, attended the institute one or two days, and imparted some valuable instruction in the art of penmanship. Three lectures only were delivered before the institute—one by Hon. A. C. Hand, upon the influence of education as developed by the progress of civilization, and two by Prof. Watson, on elocution and the importance of a thorough knowledge of the first principles of the English language. Very great interest was manifested throughout the session, not only by the teachers in attendance, but by the public generally. There were fifty-five teachers in attendance during some part of the time, of which number, however, only thirty-two attended the ten full working days. Of these fifty-five, forty-nine were from this commissioner district. I think institutes may be considered one of the fixed institutions in this county hereafter.

I commenced visiting schools for the winter term December 30, 1861, and devoted most of the time to this, when the traveling would permit, until the last of February, 1862, visiting during that time about two-thirds of all the schools in this district. The highways, owing to the heavy fall of snow and high winds, were some part of the time quite impassable, which prevented me from visiting a greater number.

April 28, according to previous notice through the newspapers of the district, I commenced visiting the several towns for the purpose of examining teachers for the summer schools, which occupied my time about two weeks. I examined in all, for the summer schools, 108 persons; to 3 of these I gave first grade certificates, to 53 second grade, to 37 third grade, and 15 I refused to license.

June 18, I commenced visiting schools for the summer term, and spent nearly every working day in this manner until near the close of August, visiting all the schools in this district except two. Owing to the roughness of the country, and the usually impassable condition of the roads in the winter, it is quite impossible to visit *all* the schools at that time, but during the summer, notwithstanding the roughness of the roads, I can visit the schools in the remote portions of the district with comparative ease.

My usual practice has been to visit the several towns in the district during the fall months, for the purpose of examining those who offer themselves as teachers of the winter schools, but owing to the fact that

it had been determined to hold an institute, and being very anxious to obtain the attendance of every teacher at its sessions, I did not visit them this fall, consequently, those who were unable to attend the institute called on me at my place of residence for the purpose of being examined.

Respectfully submitted.

FRANK M. HOPKINS,

*School Commissioner.*

KEESEVILLE, N. Y., *December, 1862.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

In obedience to the request of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, I make the following report:

I have held the office of school commissioner for the second district in the county of Essex since June, 1856. During that period I have visited most of the schools in said district at least once in each term. In some districts it is not possible to have a school in the winter season, the school houses being out of repair and very much dilapidated, consequently those districts have six months' school in the summer, and generally but one term, and I am not able to visit them more than once. It has been my practice to invite trustees and parents to visit schools with me, but they seldom do so, and I seldom find any who are willing to go to the school house and spend a few minutes in examining the school and informing themselves how their children are situated, what system is pursued, and what exertions are made to instruct them; whether they have comfortable seats, the room, benches and desks, &c., are kept neat, and the black-board so arranged as to be accessible to the scholars, and many other things which a parent ought to know.

The larger schools in this district have been steadily improving since I first saw them, and some have improved very much.

The centre school in Westport was formed by consolidating two districts into one. This school is divided into three departments—a primary department, for the small children just beginning to attend school, a middle department, for those commencing arithmetic, grammar, geography, &c., and a higher department, for the larger scholars and those preparing to teach. This school is under the care of Mr. L. B. Newell, as principal; and I consider it superior to most of our academies. Previous to the organization of this school, the schools which were consolidated to form it were scarcely deserving the name.

The smaller schools have not improved so much. Where the districts are small and contain few inhabitants the trustees are under the necessity of hiring cheap teachers, and in some localities, where the school houses are ten miles distant from each other, and the population correspondingly sparse, the trustees think themselves fortunate if they find

any one who will consent to teach. This is an evil that cannot be remedied until the population is increased.

Most of the school houses in this district are situated on the line of the road, without playgrounds or inclosure, and, with the exception of seventeen, are entirely without the necessary out-buildings, and not properly ventilated. The oldest houses are constructed according to the old fashion—the seats joining the walls on three sides and a continuous desk in front, so as effectually to keep off all warmth behind these desks and concentrate it in excess inside.

There have been built new, since 1856, seven school houses, all of which are well constructed and ventilated, and located back from the line of the road, and mostly with playgrounds of half an acre or more, and inclosed with a neat, substantial fence. They are also furnished with a black-board of suitable size and with a globe.

There are twelve houses in this district which are so much dilapidated that it is impossible to have a school in them during the winter, and in all these districts, and I presume in many others in the State, the inhabitants are abundantly able to build a good house. This is so absolutely inexcusable, that I would respectfully suggest that the Superintendent of Public Instruction recommend that the Legislature make provision withholding from all such districts the district quota, at least, of the public money, or that the trustees furnish a certificate, under the hands of the supervisor and town clerk, and dated within the year, that their school house is in good repair and suitable condition to keep school in during the winter, as a condition of participating in the distribution of the district quota of the public school money.

During the last three years I have heard no complaints about rate-bills or the expenses of the schools. Previously such complaints were rather frequent, and in many districts parents withdrew their children from school, fearing the expense, thereby, in many instances, breaking up the school.

The text-books used are Sanders', Town's, National and Willson's Readers, and Spellers of each series; Mitchell's, Smith's, Colton and Fitch's Monteith, McNally's Geographies; Adams', Greenleaf's and Davies' Arithmetics; Smith's (R. C.), Brown's, Wells', Kirkham's, Bullions', Town's Elements; Weld's and Clark's Grammars. Such a variety of books is a great detriment to our common schools, and I am of the opinion that there should be some central board or committee appointed who should have the power to direct what text-books should be used in our common schools, otherwise I see no probability of securing a uniformity of text-books; but the districts will continue to be imposed upon by sharpers whose only object is to make sale of their books.

Pupils begin their attendance at school at about five years of age, and end at about sixteen years of age. The proportion of female to male teachers is a little over three to one; and not more than six in this dis-



strict follow teaching as a permanent employment. The majority devote about three months of the year to teaching; their wages in summer will average about two dollars per week, in winter about \$15 per month. Their attendance at the teachers' institute has not averaged more than one-third of the teachers in the county; but those who have attended were very much pleased with the instructions they received, and the desire among teachers to attend the institute is rapidly increasing.

I examine teachers in grammar, arithmetic, geography, spelling, and reading; the definition of words, history, and the science of government. The teachers are most deficient in orthography and reading. These subjects were prominently brought before the teachers at the institute this fall, and much valuable instruction given them by Prof. J. Madison Watson, of New York city, and others. My practice is to give certificates of the third grade to all new beginners, and afterwards, if they bid fair to become successful teachers, certificates of the second grade. I have given but few of the first grade.

There are very few Normal school graduates in this district. Those who have taught here are decidedly superior to other teachers—their success in teaching and governing has been far superior to others. The demand for such teachers is increasing, and the desire of teachers to attend the Normal school has increased rapidly within the last three years.

There is but one academy in this district that continues its regular terms through the year, and that is at Ticonderoga. There is one at Moriah, but that is rather a fitful thing, and has no reputation. I cannot say what apparatus, or what number of students the academy at Ticonderoga has. I am of the opinion it is of no special benefit to our common schools. The number of private schools, as reported to me, is four, and the pupils attending the same 106. There are no parochial schools in this district, nor schools for colored children.

The district school libraries are totally neglected, and, of course, in a bad condition. I know of but one single district that has in the least complied with the requirements of the law, and that is the centre district at Westport. The books consist mainly of histories, biographies, and a large amount of novels and miscellaneous works. Most of the districts have Harper's series, which I do not consider at all very valuable. The people are generally well supplied with private libraries, periodicals, and newspapers, and have reading enough without resorting to the district libraries; and the money expended in the purchase of books for these libraries is, in most of the cases, entirely lost. The sentiment of the people is growing in favor of one trustee. There are now 62 districts having but one, and 29 having three trustees.

I do not know as any district complies strictly with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction. Most of the districts have two books, and keep in them the teachers' lists, in a manner, and

an account of their financial affairs, but do not keep a statement of all movable property belonging to the district.

The teachers' institute was in session ten working days. Prof. Allen was employed on recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and gave instruction in elocution, grammar, and written arithmetic. Prof. J. Madison Watson, of New York city, attended part of the time, and gave instruction in calisthenics and elocution. Doctor Cruikshank, of Albany, was present part of a day, and lectured on the science of teaching. The number of teachers present was between fifty and sixty, who all manifested the most lively interest in the exercises, and were much benefited by the instructions of Professors Allen and Watson.

I visit schools twice in each year. I counsel and advise with trustees and the parents in relation to everything connected with the schools. I give notice of examinations of teachers, and attend in each town once in the spring and once in the fall for that purpose. I urge upon parents and trustees the importance of visiting their schools, and am happy to be able to say that in some districts trustees and parents have of late shown a disposition to do so. I have not failed to represent to parents, and all others interested, that one of the greatest errors which they commit, and which does more injury to our common schools than poor teachers, bad houses, or, indeed, everything else, is their indifference to their schools, which is manifested by their utter neglect of them, excepting so far as is necessary to secure the bounty which the State has provided. It is almost an impossibility to make the child value the school more than the parent values it. I am laboring, and mean to continue my labors while life lasts, to remove this indifference; and when that is done, we shall see such an improvement in them as will gladden the heart of every philanthropist. All which is respectfully submitted.

CHAUNCEY FENTON,  
*School Commissioner.*

CROWN POINT, *January 1, 1863.*

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## FRANKLIN COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

In compliance with the requirements of the Superintendent, I beg leave to present the following general report upon educational matters in the first commissioner's district of Franklin county:

The reports of the several school districts show that there are in this part of the county 6,489 persons between the ages of four and twenty-one; of these 4,547 have been pupils in the schools during some part of the year.

The number of districts is 84; number of teachers employed for six months 95; districts in which rate-bills have been raised and collected

40; number having no rate-bills 45. The larger number of pupils are found in the former. The class of teachers employed in the former is better than in the latter. When people pay their own money they are more careful to get their money's worth than when some one else pays the bill.

I hear no complaints on the subject of rate-bills. I observe, however, that the districts in which there are no rate-bills are made up mostly of foreign-born people. I infer that this class of citizens fear rate-bills, and are pleased and contented to have their children wholly educated at the expense of the State, while, on the other hand, where the native-born citizens are in the majority, a tax or rate-bill is neither feared nor evaded, so it be necessary in order to support a good school.

**SCHOOL BUILDINGS.**—These for the most part are not very convenient or elegant. In the newer parts they are small log structures or slight frame buildings. In the older parts they are more substantial, and the older ones are being replaced by brick or stone buildings, pleasantly located, with playgrounds fenced, and in some instances embellished by shade trees.

**SCHOOL FURNITURE.**—This usually consists of a cup, without a handle; a pail, without a bail; a chair, without a back; a black-board, too often without chalk; in a few instances, an old map of the State or United States; and in a very few instances an artificial globe.

Ventilation is usually by windows or doors, or by chinks in the walls. I have been in a good many where this kind of ventilation was greatly in excess over the means for warming.

**TEXT BOOKS.**—Elementary spelling book, Town's, Sanders' and National Readers, Montith and McNally's Geographies, Adams' Arithmetic, Wells' Grammar, and Davies' Algebra.

**TEACHERS.**—Males employed within the year 31; females employed within the year 136. None make teaching a permanent employment, except a few in the village of Malone. Here four females have been employed six years, and capital teachers they are. Wages of males average \$18 per month; wages of females average \$6 per month. As a general thing, I think the females the better teachers. The disparity in wages is not just, but a part of the fault is with the ladies; they are very numerous, and competition leads them to cheapen their services.

**CERTIFICATES.**—A few third grade, many second grade, and a *very* few first grade.

**EXAMINATIONS.**—I try to find out what the candidate *knows*; not how many questions he can answer from the book, but what he knows of the principles of the subjects and studies to be taught in the school. I find our teachers, as a general thing, well qualified in *ciphering*. Almost all of them "have been through the book, and can do any sum in it." But in too many instances they have not a very practical knowledge of the science of arithmetic. Our teachers, however, are better qualified



in arithmetic than in grammar; better in geography than in grammar. In fact, this last is poorly taught at best, and in many instances not taught at all, and in some where taught, it were better not taught, than taught as it is. A sort of ciphering mania has possession of the people and schools. Most of the people up here are New Englanders by birth, and prone to "calculate" and "reckon." The calculating proclivity is a good thing, and gives assurance of economy and thrift, but with such a faculty ought to be cultivated an ability to give expression to ideas of economy and thrift, in good plain terms and grammatical language; this is neglected. I believe the fault has its beginning in our academies and high schools throughout the State. The young person who has made considerable progress in the common school is sent to these institutions to receive a finish to his education; instead of being put to a mastering of the common branches, he is placed in an "Algebra class," and set to covering a board with minuses and pluses. This answers a threefold purpose—it tickles the fancy and exalts the self-estimation of the young person himself; it pleases father and mother; and not the least item, it enhances the amount to be received from the Literature Fund. Such persons, when employed as teachers, like to exhibit their best wares, to display what they deem their best parts, and to show their ability to teach what they have learned with such infinite labor and effort. The consequence is, the whole effort and interest of the school is centred in a few large boys and girls, who are most advanced in the occult mysteries of  $x$  plus  $y$ , while primary instruction in the really practical and absolutely essential branches of a common education, is put out of sight and out of the school house. The alacrity with which a blackboard in one of these schools, when they *chance* to have *chalk*, can be covered with these mysterious symbols is really wonderful, while the paucity of words and poverty of language in their explanation is as really painful and alarming. This subject needs consideration in high places, and a remedy should be sought from some source. I think very few of our teachers ever studied, or even read, any work on the "Theory and Practice of Teaching." The most of them teach by "rote."

NORMAL GRADUATES.—I know of but one graduate of the State Normal school employed in the district. He is a successful and popular teacher.

ACADEMIES.—There is but one in the district—Franklin Academy, at Malone. Average number of pupils 100—of all ages; building three storied—stone; library small; some apparatus, but *very dusty*; studies pursued *academical*; supported by tuition bills and money received from the State, either from the Literature Fund, or on account of teachers' class. The practical benefit resulting from the teachers' class is, that twenty or more young people have the privilege of attending the academy a term without the annoyance of a tuition bill at its close; and as they are generally worthy persons, and are diligent and attentive pupils, they

make a commendable proficiency, and are better fitted, as teachers, than they would be otherwise.

DISTRICT LIBRARIES.—These, in some districts, are well kept. In others they have gone to waste. In but few do they receive the care and attention they deserve. In Malone village the library consists of 550 volumes of good books—historical, biographical, scientific, &c., together with some of the best literature of the day, well adapted to the wants of all ages and classes. The books are selected with care, are well kept, and if the same care and attention is given it hereafter that it has received for the past five or six years, it will become an ornament and a blessing to the village, and something of which it will have good reason to be proud. It is much read.

PRIVATE LIBRARIES.—Of these there are none of importance—a few of respectability. Periodicals and newspapers are read in all American families, and many of our people of foreign birth are beginning to read for themselves much more than formerly.

TRUSTEES.—The majority of districts, as shown by reports, prefer three.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.—This was held in October; attendance large; conducted by James Cruikshank, LL. D.; interest in exercises good; practical result most useful.

COMMISSIONER'S LABORS.—I intend to visit the schools at least once in each term; the important ones more. The snow was so deep last winter, and in out-of-the-way places the roads so impassable, that all could not be reached. I have, however, made 181 visitations within the year, and have organized two institutes—one in March, one in October. In my visits I notice the methods of instruction, and the manner of conducting the school. If improvements can be made, I suggest them, and practically illustrate them.

In regard to text-books, I urge the use of the best, and the necessity of uniformity in the school. To reach the more distant schools in my district requires a travel of some seventy-five miles. This involves some labor, especially when (as last winter) the snow lies four feet deep in this "Siberian region." I give a punctual attendance upon calls and complaints; and, in short, endeavor to do the things devolving upon a commissioner to do as well as I know how.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

SIDNEY P. BATES,  
*School Commissioner.*

MALONE, December 6, 1862.

## SECOND DISTRICT.

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

The undersigned, school commissioner of the 2d district of Franklin county, N. Y., respectfully submits the following report :

The whole number of children residing in the district between the ages of 4 and 21 years of age, is.....	6,435
Number attending school.....	4,206
Number not attending school.....	<u>2,229</u>

The present rate-bill system of this State has a tendency to prevent a larger attendance of pupils in our public schools, and public sentiment in this district is decidedly opposed to it.

The school houses, particularly those recently built, are good, and are, for the most part, constructed of wood or stone, with suitable out-buildings and convenient arrangements for ventilating. There are many old school houses in the district that are unfit for the purposes for which they are used. Not enough attention is paid in selecting suitable sites, or grading, fencing, and beautifying school yards. The school houses are warmed with suitable stoves, and furnished with hard wood for fuel. With the exception of blackboards, our school houses are poorly furnished with apparatus; a few have globes and maps. The branches of study generally pursued are reading, spelling, arithmetic, algebra, elements of geography, writing, grammar, history, declamation, composition, and civil government.

TEACHERS.—About one-third of the teachers are males, and two-thirds females. Not more than one in ten of the males make teaching a profession, and probably not more than one in fifteen of the females. Males devote about four of the winter months in the year to teaching—average wages \$18 per month; females eight months of the year—average wages \$12; ten dollars in summer, and fourteen in winter.

Nearly all of the teachers now employed in our schools have attended a teachers' institute in this State within the year, to the great advantage of the schools. Teachers are subjected to a rigid examination in all of the elementary branches taught in the public schools; also, as to their abilities to maintain order and communicate knowledge. The majority of teachers are best qualified in mathematics, and most deficient in reading, grammar, and geography.

Nearly one-half of the teachers have studied Page's Theory and Practice of Teaching, and about one-third take and read the New York Teacher.

We grant three grades of certificates. The first grade entitles the bearer to teach for three years in any town in the county, and is granted to not more than one in twenty of those engaged. The second entitles the bearer to teach in any district in the county for one year, and constitutes nine-tenths of all the certificates granted. The third entitles the bearer to teach in some particular district in the commissioner district for one year, and constitutes not more than one-twentieth of the whole number granted. Teachers of a higher grade are in great de-



mand, and the supply very small. Normal school graduates and undergraduates make the most *efficient* teachers in our schools. The number in this district does not exceed five; their influence excellent.

ACADEMIES.—There is but one academy in this district. It is located at Fort Covington. The building is of stone, and is in good repair. The number of students in attendance is seventy-five, of whom about one-third are under twelve years of age, the other two-thirds between the ages of twelve and twenty-five. Library small—only 275 volumes; but well selected. Apparatus, philosophical and chemical, good, and in sufficient quantity. Studies pursued: Elementary and higher English, including all the higher mathematics and English literature, with ancient and modern languages. The principal receives \$1,000 per annum; his assistants (three in all), \$250 each. Their support is derived from tuition fees, Literature Fund, and fund for instructing teachers' classes, and from the interest of an academic fund.

The common schools derive much benefit from teachers instructed in teachers' classes in our academy. The people manifest a strong desire that the appropriation should be continued.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—The number of private schools is decreasing, as compared with former years. There have been but eight in this district during the last year, containing, in all, 192 pupils.

There are no parochial, colored, or union free schools.

LIBRARIES throughout the commissioner's district are very much neglected, and but comparatively few of the books are read. As a general thing, they are composed of good works; but, on the whole, are lightly esteemed. This may be inferred from the fact that most of the districts, where the library money does not exceed three dollars, appropriate it to the payment of teachers' wages.

PRIVATE LIBRARIES.—Nearly all the inhabitants in this district possess more or less of a private library, and all, with the exception of a few French families, are supplied with some kind of a newspaper or periodical. This large amount of private reading has a great tendency to lessen the demand for school district libraries. Still, I think the people generally would be unwilling to have the appropriation for library purposes suspended.

TRUSTEES.—I have no doubt that the majority of the inhabitants in this district prefer one to three trustees, as will be seen by the following statement: Out of 84 districts, 45 have but one trustee; 22 two trustees, and 17 three trustees; and those having but *two* trustees are working into the one trustee system. In districts where there is but *one* trustee, the business is done in a much more correct, prompt, and energetic manner.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—The last teachers' institute in this county was held in Malone, and was conducted by James Cruikshank, L.L. D., editor of the New York Teacher. Instruction was given in all the elementary

and higher branches usually taught in the public schools, and their principles fully discussed, and their applications made plain and well understood. The institute was a complete success—as all are that Dr Cruikshank conducts. There were about 130 teachers in attendance on an average for the term of ten days. No provision on the part of the State, has done more for the public schools than the appropriation for teachers' institutes. The public has manifested much interest in these meetings, and the benefits produced by them are plainly manifest in all parts of the district.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—The labors of the commissioner of this district consist in examining and granting licenses to teachers, visiting schools twice a year, and organizing and aiding in conducting teachers' associations and institutes, and making such changes in school districts as are deemed necessary, together with such other labors as necessity may dictate.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

WILLIAM GILLIS,

*School Commissioner.*

FORT COVINGTON, December 26, 1862.

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## FULTON COUNTY.

### *Superintendent Public Instruction:*

Dear Sir—The schools of Fulton county at the present time are in a flourishing condition. A large proportion of the school houses are in good order.

The studies most usually pursued in our schools are reading, arithmetic, grammar, geography, and penmanship; also, algebra, philosophy, physiology, and chemistry are studied with commendable zeal.

A large proportion of our teachers are females, who follow teaching as a permanent employment. The wages of females range from \$1.25 to \$4 per week, and that of males from \$10 to \$25 per month.

The attendance on teachers' institute the last year was very large, larger we believe than ever before in the county. We had a successful session, and it seemed to be highly appreciated by teachers and citizens.

We have a few teachers among us who are graduates of the Normal school, or who have received certificates from the State Department. They are teachers of energy, tact and talent, and exert a powerful influence for good in the cause of education generally. The teachers attending normal classes who have been sent out from our academics, some of them have labored with great success, whilst others seem to have made but little or no progress in the art of teaching, and no advancement in science or literature.

Of the standard of certificates granted by us about one-half are of the second grade, and the balance is about equally divided between the first and the third grades.

The school district libraries, for the most part, are but in a middling condition. The books are good, but the officers who are especially appointed to look after them, do but little or nothing that the statute requires.

In a few days we shall send you a full report of the proceedings of our institute, wherein you will find the number of days we were in session, names and residences of persons employed as instructors, subjects on which instruction was given, names of lecturers and their subjects, number of teachers in attendance, public interest manifested in the exercises, &c.

The amount of labor performed by us during the last year has been quite extensive. We have personally inspected over 100 teachers, made 150 visits to the schools of this county, traveled hundreds of miles to accomplish it, addressed 500 letters to trustees, teachers and officers connected with the interests of common schools, held an institute, attended associations, altered districts, and made reports to State Department; these, with other duties that have been performed, have made our office one of labor and responsibility.

Very truly yours,

IRA H. VAN NESS,

*School Commissioner.*

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## GENESEE COUNTY.

To the Hon. V. M. Rice, *Supt. of Public Instruction* :

Sir—In answer to your circular, I submit the following report:

The number of children in the county, September 30, 1862, between the ages of four and twenty-one years, was 10,708; the number of different names on the teachers' lists, as nearly as I could ascertain, during the last school year, was 7,313; the average attendance was about 5,128. The pupils in attendance in the summer were generally between the ages of five and fifteen, and between six and sixteen in the winter. From seven to eight I consider about the right age to commence attending school; not much under eight usually. The law fixing the ages for drawing public money I think ought to be changed; but perhaps it would not be policy.

Part of the expense being paid by rate-bills may keep some from attending regularly, but has not the effect, I think, to keep many names off the lists.



The amount expended within the last school year for apparatus, not including the Union school, Batavia, was.....	\$42 96
For building and repairing school houses, and for sites and other conveniences .....	1,870 04
Total for permanent improvements.....	\$1,913 00
Amount paid for library books in the different districts, and for apparatus in the union school.....	769 57
Total.....	\$2,682 57
Amount paid teachers (including \$2,160.95 paid the union school teachers).....	\$18,042 07
For wood and other incidental expenses.....	1,950 04
Making amount for running expenses.....	19,992 11
Total expenses of the common schools for the year, not including commissioner's salary, institute expenses, &c....	\$22,674 68

Of the above amount one-half is paid with public money, one-fourth by rate-bill, and one-fourth by tax.

The schools (except the union school) are not supplied with apparatus, except blackboards, and a few with maps, charts or globes.

The expenses of the union school are paid by tax and voluntary contributions, except what are paid with public money. It is the only free school, as all others are liable to rate-bills.

During the year ending September 30, 1862, 263 different persons have, for a longer or shorter time, been engaged in teaching in the public schools of the county, of whom 177 are females, and 91 males. Of these, only three or four males, and about 90 of the females make teaching their business.

Female teachers in the summer generally receive from \$1.50 to \$1.75 per week, exclusive of board, and in the winter about \$15 or \$16 per month. Male teachers from \$18 to \$20 per month—some of both classes receiving more, and a few less, than the above wages.

The proportion of male teachers is much less the present winter than last. Although several teachers from this county have graduated at the Normal school, but one graduate and two undergraduates have been teaching in the county the past year. Others are teaching elsewhere successfully, and under good pay.

Some teachers holding State certificates show a commendable zeal and ambition, while others are effectually killed by a similar document, and lose all interest in teaching and in teachers' doings.

There are seven academies and seminaries and one classical school in the county, besides the academical department of the union school. I cannot state their attendance.

The small private schools are few, and growing beautifully less.

But little interest is generally felt in district libraries, and the library money could generally be used to more advantage for other purposes.

Over half the districts have but one trustee, I think, and the business is generally better attended to by one than by three.

Our teachers' institute in October was a perfect success. I herewith send you the report of the secretary of the institute.

In reference to my labors, I find I have no time to be idle. With 140 schools to visit, teachers to be examined and licensed, reports, correspondence, institutes and associations to be attended to, *I manage to keep busy.*

All of which is respectfully submitted.

O. S. THROOP,  
*School Commissioner for Genesee Co.*

BATAVIA, December, 1862.

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## GREENE COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

*To the Superintendent of Public Instruction :*

The whole number of children of school age in this district is 6,268; attending school in winter, 2,883; in summer, 2,596.

I cannot give any definite information as to the effect of rate-bills on attendance, nor public sentiment in regard to them.

In regard to the character and condition of school houses, about one-third are respectable, one-third comparatively respectable, one-third superlatively bad. Four are of brick, one stone, and seventy-four frame—making, in all, seventy-nine.

The sites are generally small, and on land of least value in the neighborhood, with no adornments. Outbuildings are scarce, and in bad condition.

All have blackboards, outline maps in a few, occasionally a map of the United States or the State of New York, and now and then a globe.

The houses are ventilated by raising or lowering the windows, or opening the door; and warmed with wood or coal by stoves mostly close.

Text-books in use: Readers, Sanders', Parker & Watson's; spellers, Sanders'; grammar, Brown's; arithmetic, Davies', Thomson's, &c., &c. Geography, all kinds; dictionary, Webster's. Clark's Analysis is being introduced in many of the schools.

The branches of study most generally pursued are reading, writing, grammar, geography, and arithmetic.

Ages of pupils beginning and ending their attendance: Commencing three and a half to four years, and ending from fifteen to twenty. Pupils, in a majority of cases, probably attend school less than four months in a year. The progress of the schools is such as might be expected, when we take into consideration the character and qualifications of the teach-

ers employed. Most of the teachers may be styled temporary—that is, the males teaching in winter, the females in summer.

The most urgent wants of the schools are: First, a disposition in the employers to procure good and permanent teachers, enlarged houses, and beautiful grounds; second, a disposition in the employers to encourage and sustain the teacher in the discipline and government of the school, and a uniformity of text-books throughout the State not liable to a revision every full moon.

Of the 78 teachers employed in the winter of 1861 and '62, 45 were males and 33 females. In the summer of 1862, of the 79 teachers employed, 2 were males and 77 females. Three only of the above can be said to be permanent teachers. The wages of teachers vary for males from \$12 to \$20 per month, and board; for females, from \$1.25 to \$3 per week, and board. Our institute held last fall was attended by about 100—not over one-third of the number of teachers temporarily employed as teachers in our county. The character of the examinations to which I subject teachers is in accordance with the statute. To define the branches of study I find them best prepared to teach would be difficult; but they are generally most deficient in grammar, especially in spelling and the definition of words.

**CERTIFICATES.**—The grades usually granted are the second, a few of the third, still less of the first.

**QUALIFICATIONS.**—There is no demand for teachers of high qualifications. We have but one Normal graduate employed. There is no academy in my commissioner district.

**PRIVATE SCHOOLS** are on the decrease. The number will not, I think, exceed twelve, and those are entirely confined to large villages, and generally composed, with one or two exceptions, of small scholars.

We have no parochial schools. Our colored school in Catskill is embraced in the public free school association, and consequently supported by tax. Number of pupils about forty.

The above district (No. 1 in Catskill) is the only union free school organized under the law of 1853 in my jurisdiction.

The district school libraries are in an unhealthy condition—the character of books diversified—estimation in which they are held deplorable. The money appropriated for this purpose would be much more usefully dispensed in providing text books for children of indigent parents, who in many cases are actually unable to procure them from the scanty reward they receive for their labor.

Private libraries in the rural districts are meagre; periodicals sparsely taken; newspapers ditto; effect on the district libraries of little consideration.

Our institute, held last fall, was said to be, by those acquainted with the subject, a fair success; a full report of which was made to the Department at its close.



I reported to the Department not long since the name and post office address of a trustee in each district in my commissioner district, marking the number three or one. I think more districts elect three than one.

I have since my election visited every school district twice in each year, many of them three, and not a few of them four times. The last year 40 three times; 10 four times. I hold appointments in each town, spring and fall, for the examination of teachers; and I call personally on the respective town clerks for the district reports. I am engaged in no other business. My expenses, which I call necessary, amounted the past year to \$121.58. There is no dissatisfaction that I have heard of as respects the office of school commissioner.

The foregoing report, meagre as it is, I hope will prove satisfactory.

Respectfully your obedient servant,

C. C. W. CLEVELAND,

*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

The undersigned, school commissioner for the second district, of Greene county, in accordance with the requirements of the Department, would respectfully submit the subjoined report:

Notwithstanding the exigencies of the times, the average duration of the terms and the attendance upon the schools in this district have exceeded those of the previous year; yet there is much diversity of opinion, in different portions of the district, relative to the benefits derived from our common schools. In neighborhoods settled by inhabitants from the Eastern States we have generally found a large proportion of the persons entitled to a share in the school fund in the school room. In these localities rate-bills are paid promptly and cheerfully. In other sections, where traditions are more revered than laws, any system or course that abstracts *cents*, instead of dollars, from their pockets is decidedly popular; here school is kept—sometimes taught.

There has been less money expended in repairing and building than in former years. Three-fourths of our school houses are creditable, comfortable buildings; some of the rest are very old, and would not make respectable pigpens. In one of these districts a portion of the inhabitants have tried for years to erect a new house; but ignorance and wealth holding the balance of power, the requisite vote could not be obtained.

As yet but little attention has been given to adorning and beautifying either the school houses or their surroundings. All acknowledge that it should be the most pleasant and attractive spot in the neighborhood. I have repeatedly advised in relation to these things, and am happy to state that a few have heeded the advice. Had groves been planted on our playgrounds twenty years ago, who can estimate their influence in popularizing our common schools?

Blackboards are used extensively; maps and globes more or less in nearly every district.

Reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic and grammar are the principal branches taught, although in many places I have found good classes in history, book-keeping, algebra, and geometry.

Pupils usually commence going to school at five years of age, and attend a portion of the time until eighteen.

There are 135 teachers in this district, three-fifths of whom are females; 35 professional, who teach nine or ten months during the year. The males receive \$35 and the females \$14 per month. The temporary teachers generally alternate, males teaching in the winter, females in the summer; length of each term about four months.

The candidates are examined in classes, orally, in the branches prescribed by the Code of Public Instruction. Those entitled to first grade certificates are licensed for three years; the others for one year or less.

Very few of the temporary teachers have read any work upon the theory and practice of teaching. The examinations have shown that the applicants for licenses are more deficient in geography and grammar than in other branches. Arithmetic is their forte. The demand for a better class of teachers is annually increasing. We have but three Normal pupils within our jurisdiction. They are worthy, successful laborers, and exert a salutary influence in the right direction.

Owing to injudicious selections in many places, the one trusteeship has become unpopular. The people are returning to the old system. If they were not allowed to hire relatives, they would favor the new law. Not more than one-tenth of the districts have furnished the books required by the Code.

The teachers' institute was held at Catskill. Ten days' lectures were given upon pertinent subjects by Prof. Cavert, of Albany; J. M. Watson, New York; A. M. Osborn, Catskill; J. Hutchings, New York, and Prof. Clark, of Homer. Some of the lecturers aided in conducting the daily exercises. Profs. Allen, of Albany, and Potter, of New York, also assisted. The first week but little interest was manifested by the citizens; the second week, however, we were favored with a goodly number of the friends of education.

Since my last report was made, I have examined 91 teachers, granted 70 certificates—15 first grade, 33 second grade, and 22 of the third; have visited 84 of the schools once; 50 twice; 11 three times; 4 four times; 1 five times.

There is but one academy in this district. The number of students attending it is 45—14 between nine and thirteen years of age, 24 between thirteen and eighteen, 11 between eighteen and twenty-five; it is supplied with philosophical apparatus. The substantial and ornamental English branches and the languages are taught. Salary of the principal \$500 per annum. The benefit derived from the appropriation for the

normal class is exceedingly limited. In our humble opinion, this fund should be added to that used to defray the expenses of institutes.

District libraries have outlived their utility. Books, periodicals, and papers have been so cheap for the last ten years, that families have supplied themselves with reading matter; and districts that could have added their library money to the teachers' fund. If they were permitted, undoubtedly nine-tenths of the districts would sell their books for old paper.

M. L. NEWCOMB.

SOUTH DURHAM, *December 26, 1862.*

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## HAMILTON COUNTY.

WELLS, *December 26th, 1862.*

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

Dear Sir—About two-thirds of the children of school age in this county attend the district schools during some part of the year. It is a very surprising fact that, in this enlightened age, so many parents are so perfectly indifferent to the most precious interests of their children. Four-fifths of the cases in which children do not enjoy the benefits of a common school education may be attributed to the remissness of parents. Many men of means allow their children to run at large in our streets, and squander away their time, without benefiting themselves, their parents, or the community in which they reside.

There are a few narrow-minded individuals in this county, as well as in all others, that stand in perfect horror of rate-bills, and frequently withhold their children from school in anticipation of being called upon for a few shillings to aid in their education; but it is a refreshing fact, however, that such men are only the exception to the general rule, for the great majority bear these little burdens with cheerfulness and becoming dignity. In most cases, those that complain the most bitterly of rate-bills are those most able to pay without embarrassment.

The school houses in this county, with a few exceptions, are very comfortable, convenient and pleasantly located. In some cases there is a lack of furniture indispensable to a school room; but with these few exceptions they are snug and tidy, and seem to have been built with an eye to their adaptation.

Children usually begin to attend school at the age of five, and attend more or less until they are sixteen or seventeen years old.

We want more live, thorough-going teachers; but before we can expect to see a very great proportion of such teachers in our schools, we must work out a change of sentiment amongst our people. In many of our school districts they employ teachers for the very least amount of



money that one can be induced to teach for. In these schools I always find third grade teachers. Most of our districts are not willing to offer fair inducements to good teachers; if they would do so, many more persons of education would turn their attention to teaching as a profession.

The estimation in which our school district libraries have formerly been held appears to be on the decline. The books do not seem to meet the wants of the people. Most families in these times are in possession of reading matter, in the form of books, periodicals, and newspapers, adapted to their particular tastes. This fact accounts for the depreciation in the popularity of district libraries.

The teachers' institute for this county was held at Wells Centre, commencing on the 14th of October, and closing on the 24th of October. Prof. Wm. M. Stark, of Northampton, assisted by Clark S. Tanner, Esq., of Fish House, Fulton county, were the principal instructors on the following subjects, viz: Elocution, orthography, geography, written and intellectual arithmetic, grammar, algebra, parsing, lectures on physiology, physical geography, astronomy, and school teaching. The whole number of teachers in attendance was about forty. The interest manifested by the public was very encouraging and gratifying.

Respectfully yours,

WM. W. BURNHAM.

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## HERKIMER COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

NEWPORT, November 20, 1862.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction* :

My Dear Sir—The following is my report on public instruction within my official jurisdiction :

The whole number of pupils attending district schools in district No. 1, Herkimer county, is 5,759; number attending less than two months is 643; two months and less than four, 2,041; four months and less than six, 1,346; six months and less than eight, 831.

The effect that rate-bills have on the attendance is, in my opinion, a bad one. Parents who are poor, and many of those who are not, often take their children out, when they find that the public money will no longer pay their school bills. Public sentiment is gradually becoming unfavorable to rate-bills. I have for some time been of the opinion that a system of free schools throughout the State ought at once to be established. The *real friends* of education demand it.

Provision for the instruction of pupils is gradually becoming better. More attention is paid to the comforts of pupils than heretofore. Considerable attention is given to the building and ventilation of school houses; out-buildings and school house sites are usually good. The sup-

ply of school apparatus is not, in all cases, such as it should be, though an improvement in this respect is being made. It consists usually of globes, normal and astronomical charts. Sanders' series of Readers, Adams and Thomson's Arithmetics, and Brown's Grammar are used. These are the principal branches pursued.

Pupils commence school at the age of five years, and continue until fifteen or sixteen years of age at the district school. Females attend the whole of said time; males about two-thirds. The progress of the schools is usually very good—an improvement in this respect is annually being made.

A uniformity of text-books should be had in every county; at least in each school commissioner's district. It would save a great deal of clashing, and a great deal of lost time. School commissioners should have the power to say what books should be used. I am inclined to think that it would be readily given by the people. If school commissioners could have the power of saying what kind of school apparatus should be used, and what should be the supply, it would be well, and would be a great advantage to schools. It would be well, too, if practicable, to give the commissioner the power of designating, through the teacher, the studies that each scholar should pursue. Let him act strictly in accordance with printed instructions given by the commissioner. There would be no trouble about this, if each school district could have a library of school books furnished—say by means of a tax—the commissioner to have power to say what amounts should be raised annually for this purpose.

About three-fifths of the teachers are females—two-fifths males. About one-third make teaching a permanent employment. Male teachers get in the winter from \$14 to \$20 per month, and board—average \$18; and from \$25 to \$40 per month, and board themselves—average \$30. Female teachers get from \$1.75 to \$2.50 per week, and board; and from \$3 to \$5, and board themselves—average, when boarded, \$2; when they board themselves, \$4. There are very few female teachers in the winter.

The attendance at our teachers' institute this fall was larger than ever before. There were from different parts of the county two hundred and sixty teachers in attendance. A majority of them were present during the whole session. Teachers under my charge are subjected to a verbal, though rigid examination in the branches usually taught in our common schools. I usually find my teachers best prepared to teach arithmetic and grammar; they are most deficient in geography and reading. About one-quarter have read works on the "Theory and Practice of Teaching." I grant annually about 150 certificates—one-eighth of which are the first grade, one-half the second grade, three-eighths the third grade. There is a fair demand for teachers of high qualifications, and the supply is good. The number of Normal school graduates and undergraduates employed do not, I think, exceed eight or ten. They usually meet

with good success, though the demand for their services does not seem to be very great.

There are in my district two academical institutions—Fairfield and Little Falls. The number of students in attendance at the Little Falls academy is 104, and the average age is 16 years. There is one building, which is stone. There are 683 volumes in the library, valued at \$444. A very complete set of philosophical and chemical apparatus is possessed, worth \$595. Wages paid to teachers annually amount to \$1,900.

The Fairfield academy numbers 226—one-third of whom are ladies, two-thirds gentlemen. There are five large buildings—three stone and two frame. There is a large and well selected cabinet of minerals. There are two flourishing societies, which have libraries numbering, with that of the seminary, over 3,000 volumes. The apparatus is worth over \$2,000, and is equal, if not superior to that of any other similar institution in the State. The studies pursued are the ancient and modern languages, mathematics, natural science, &c., &c.; vocal and instrumental music, oil painting, Grecian painting, &c., &c. There is also a commercial department, offering all the facilities of the best commercial colleges. Wages paid to teachers amount to about \$4,000.00. Common schools usually derive great benefit from the teachers' class taught in this seminary, as many of our teachers come from this institution.

The number of private schools in my district is 12; number of pupils in attendance, 229. Private schools in this vicinity are gradually decreasing. They are not so popular as in former years.

Our district school libraries, with a very few exceptions, are in rather a poor condition. Some immediate change with regard to district libraries should be made. Too little attention is paid to the selection of such books as will be interesting to those for whom they are kept. Librarians are negligent, and often lose books. School commissioners ought to have the power of selecting and distributing books. Library money should be placed in their hands. Too small an amount of money is annually allowed for library purposes. More should be allowed by the Department, or else trustees should be made to raise a certain amount annually, in proportion to the number of scholars. More stringent regulations should be made with regard to the general supervision and keeping of libraries. The estimation in which the people now hold them, is a poor one indeed. More books should be annually purchased, and the best selections made. It would be well to allow librarians the fines collected from those who draw books. Such fines should be large.

I think the people generally prefer one trustee to three. I am fully convinced that a regulation of this kind should be immediately made. What one trustee could do very easily, three might find, as they often do, great difficulty in doing. The inconvenience, too, attached to the



assembling of three when any action is to be taken is very great. The consequence is, that one usually does the work and the others find fault. A majority of the districts elect three, more because they are in the habit of doing so than anything else. I think that most of the trustees comply with the requirements of No. 116, Code of Public Instruction.

Both commissioners in this county unite in holding a teachers' institute. Our institute this year convened at Mohawk, Oct. 20th, and closed on Friday, Oct. 31st, making a session of 11 days. Prof. C. T. Pooler of Deansville academy, Prof. T. N. Beebe of Mohawk, and Prof. J. S. Smith of Frankfort, assisted in conducting the class exercises. Prof. Pooler took reading, grammar and occasionally arithmetic; Prof. Beebe, written and mental arithmetic; Prof. Smith, geography. Dr. Fisher of Hamilton College, Prof. Townsend of Rochester, Rev. Mr. Briggs of Mohawk, Judge Dean of Herkimer, Rev. Mr. Lord of Warren, and Hon. V. M. Rice, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Emerson W. Keyes, Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction, were our lecturers. The interest manifested at our last teachers' institute was unbounded—every one taking an interest in the teachers' institute. The success of the institute will depend very much upon the amount of money received. A session of four weeks would prove beneficial to the school interest, providing the requisite means to sustain an institute this length of time could be allowed. I would not think it advisable to continue a session longer than said time.

There are ten towns in my district, and one hundred school districts. I usually commence visiting schools about the first or middle of December. It takes me from eight to ten weeks to visit them once each. After finishing my winter visitations, I have the apportionment of public money to make out. I commence my examinations of teachers about the middle of April, and spend from two to three weeks in the different towns for this purpose. I commence my summer visitations about the first of June. I am employed at this business again from eight to ten weeks. I have to spend some time in the fall in organizing a teachers' institute; I am employed at the institute about two weeks. A part of my examinations take place at the institute. I spend some time after the close of the session in examining teachers. I am often called upon for assistance and advice—occasionally to act in altering, dissolving, or establishing a school district. I am always at home on Saturdays to attend to business calls. The greater part of my time is employed in attending to the duties connected with my office. Our salaries are too small; no commissioner can afford to spend so much of his time, and be at so great an expense as constantly attends him, for the sum of \$500 or \$600. The State should increase our salaries.

Your obedient servant,

ETHAN A. IVES,

*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

CEDARVILLE, December 25, 1862.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction* :

Sir—In accordance with the request, made in your circular to school commissioners, of Aug. 27, 1862, the school commissioner of the 2d assembly district of Herkimer county respectfully submits the following report:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—There are 98 school districts under my supervision, which report 6,880 persons of school age; 4,627 of whom have attended common schools a portion of the past year.

The rate-bill system is considered, by those who are most competent to judge, as a standing bid for cheap and unqualified teachers; and from personal observation, I feel justified in saying, that this system, in many instances, proves detrimental to the best interests of our common schools, by either preventing attendance, or encouraging the employment of cheap teachers.

The school houses of this district are improving somewhat from year to year. About three-fourths of them are tolerably well constructed, having comfortable seats, and some means for ventilation, &c. Wood stoves are usually employed for warming purposes, coal stoves are used in a few instances. About one-half of the schools are passably well supplied with school room appurtenances. Many of them are, however, destitute of school registers, phonetic charts, globes, and geographical maps, and some are destitute of dictionaries. About one-third of our school houses are provided with suitable out-buildings—some are entirely destitute of these conveniences. About one-eighth of our school houses have fine sites, being somewhat removed from the highway, and having playgrounds attached. About three-eighths are located near road-crossings, groves, or commons, and are thus afforded tolerable conveniences for recreation.

The text books in general use are Sanders' series of Readers; Thomson's Arithmetics; and Brown's Grammar. Parker and Watson's series of Readers, Robinson's Arithmetics, and Clark's Grammars are being introduced into some of our leading schools.

We frequently find scholars in our summer schools as young as three years. This, however, is an error which proves an annoyance to the teacher and school, and punishes the child physically far more than he is improved mentally. As the mass of the people attend only the common school, we find the ages of those who attend to vary from three to twenty-one, and occasionally to twenty-five years. We seldom find in our summer schools scholars who are more than twelve or fifteen years of age, the older ones, and especially the males, attending only the winter term.

Many of our schools are in need of thorough, well-qualified teachers, who propose to make teaching a profession, and not an incidental occupation. They also need the establishment of some means to awaken an

educational interest, and a worthy appreciation of merit on the part of school patrons and trustees.

TEACHERS.—About two-thirds of the teachers of this district are females. A majority of the teachers employed in winter are males, while nine-tenths of the summer teachers are females. A very small proportion of the male teachers make teaching a permanent employment. About one-half of the female teachers make teaching, and a preparation for its duties, their entire occupation, at least for a brief number of years. The highest wages paid to gentlemen teachers of this district are \$65 per month, and the lowest \$12 per month. Ladies receive from \$2 per week to \$1 per day. Young teachers in summer are occasionally employed as low as \$1.50 per week and board. Teachers who receive the highest wages mentioned board themselves. The usual custom, however, is for teachers to board about the districts.

Nine-tenths of the resident teachers of this district attended either one or both of the teachers' institutes, held in this Assembly district within the past year. The teachers' associations are well attended.

We employ in the examination of teachers both written and oral questions, requiring written answers to the former, and intersperse with the latter many questions that may test the common sense and the ability of the teacher to regulate and control a school, as well as his knowledge of the sciences.

Many of our teachers are very deficient in a knowledge of mental science, physiology and history, and but a very small proportion have ever studied any work on the theory and practice of teaching.

We employ the third grade certificates in nearly all cases of inexperience in teaching, believing that the merit of the teacher is much better tested in the school room than by answering any number of book questions. In our opinion certificates of long continuance sometimes interfere with the prosperity of our schools, by lessening the zeal of the teacher for personal improvement. We have consequently granted but few certificates of the first grade, using the second grade for one year instead. The demand for teachers of high qualifications, although somewhat upon the increase, is far short of the extent which the real welfare of our schools requires. Notwithstanding the fact that pecuniary considerations often outweigh real merit in the minds of trustees, and cause inexperienced teachers to occupy the places of many successful and experienced ones, still, in our opinion, the supply of teachers of *high* qualifications is far short of that which the educational interests of the country demand. There is but a small comparative number of Normal school graduates employed in this assembly district. Graduates from this school, however, where employed, very frequently become our most successful teachers; but as no school has the magical power to manufacture perfect teachers, the Normal graduates, in common with other teachers, gain their real diploma as successful instructors only after



graduating at the school of experience, and proving that their natural qualifications are equal to those acquired.

ACADEMIES.—The academy at West Winfield is the only one in this assembly district. There are at present 112 students in attendance, 53 of whom are males, and 59 are females. The building is ample, and in good repair. The apparatus of the philosophical and chemical departments is sufficiently extensive for all practical purposes, and the library is quite extensive and in good condition. The studies pursued are the usual varieties of common and higher English, together with the ancient and modern languages. Vocal and instrumental music, painting, &c., receive due attention. The rates of tuition vary from \$4.50 to \$6.50 per term.

The teachers' class, in connection with this institution, is made both interesting and profitable to its members, and its beneficial results are plainly marked upon the common schools of the surrounding country.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND FREE SCHOOLS.—There are three private schools and two free schools in this assembly district. The private schools have an attendance of 89 scholars. These schools are gradually decreasing in number.

The free schools mentioned were under the law of 1853; one is located at Ilion, the other at Mohawk, both in the town of German Flats.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—The libraries of some of our first class districts are kept in good order, and are doubtless of much value in diffusing general intelligence, but we regret to say that in a majority of cases they are much neglected, many books being lost, scattered and torn, and many libraries, from neglect and injudicious selections, are of but very little if of any practical value to the districts in which they are located. In our opinion, the variety and cheapness of books, and the great abundance of periodical and newspaper literature at the present time, has superseded, in a great degree, the general necessity for school district libraries, and has opened a field for general reading which is much better adapted to the popular taste, while it is entirely within the means of a great majority of the reading public. We would respectfully suggest that the expenditure of the library fund, as at present applied, is attended with very meagre results, and that there are a variety of channels in which it might be used, and be of far greater service to the districts that it is intended to benefit. It would seem that there are few matters in connection with school interests which are more worthy of legislative consideration.

TRUSTEES.—The people of this district seem somewhat divided in sentiment as to which is preferable, one or three trustees. In our opinion, where a judicious selection is made, the interests of a district are much better subserved by the independent action of one trustee, than by the somewhat trammelled and partially irresponsible action of three. About one-

third of the districts under my supervision have adopted the one trustee system, and the number is yearly increasing. We regret to say that the trustees of very many of our school districts have not complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

**TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.**—It has been our custom to assist in holding two teachers' institutes each year in this district—one at West Winfield and one at Mohawk. Commissioner Crandall, of Oneida county, has been associated with us each year in conducting the institute at Winfield, and Commissioner Ives, of the first district, in holding the regular county institute at Mohawk. The last institute, held at Winfield, began Oct. 7th, and closed October 18th, making a session of eleven days. The instructors, aside from the commissioners, were Prof. E. O. Hovey, A. M., of West Winfield seminary; Prof. A. S. Wood, A. B., of Whitestown; Prof. L. R. Bliss, A. M., of West Exeter; Prof. T. N. Beebe, of Mohawk; Prof. L. A. Phillips, of Homer; Dr. O. B. Wilcox, of Earlville; Rev. M. E. Dunham, of Clayville. Instruction was given on the following subjects: Orthography, reading, phonetics, grammar, mental and written arithmetic, geography, physiology, writing, spelling, calisthenics, singing, &c. The lecturers and their subjects were as follows: Dr. S. W. Fisher, D. D., subject, "American Ideas and the Great Rebellion;" Prof. A. S. Wood, subject, "Moral Training in Schools;" Rev. M. E. Dunham, subject, "Influence of Government on Individual Character;" Ellis H. Roberts, Esq., subject, "Hobbies;" H. M. Gross, Esq., subject, "Language;" Hon. G. H. Andrews, subject, "Habits;" Prof. J. S. Gardner, A. M., subject, "Geology of New York." There were 125 teachers in regular attendance, besides many teachers and individuals who attended irregularly. The lecture room was always well filled, and a general interest was manifested in the exercises of the institute.

The county institute began its session October 20th, and closed October 31st, making also a session of eleven days. Prof. C. T. Pooler, A. M., of Deansville academy; Prof. T. N. Beebe, of Mohawk; Prof. J. S. Smith, of Frankfort; Prof. Fish, of Rochester; Prof. Birdseye, of Utica; Prof. Hovey, A. M., of West Winfield seminary; Prof. Potter of New York; and others, assisted in conducting class exercises. Instruction was given upon the following subjects: Orthography, reading, grammar, phonetics, mental and written arithmetic, geography, philosophy, physiology, map drawing, writing, singing, &c. The names of lecturers and their subjects were as follows: Dr. S. W. Fisher, D. D., subject, "American Ideas and the Great Rebellion;" Prof. Townsend, of Rochester, gave three lectures upon the following subjects: "Phrenology and its relations to School Government," "Out-door, Open-air Object Teaching," "The Power of Sympathy;" Hon. Ezra Graves, of Herkimer, subject, "The Teacher's Vocation;" Hon. E. W. Keyes, Dept. Sup't, subject, "Progressive Educational Ideas;" Rev. L. L. Briggs, of Mohawk, subject, "The Poetry of Mathematics."

The following are the names and subjects of day lecturers: Hon. V. M. Rice, Superintendent of Public Instruction, an extemporaneous address upon the "General Duties and Responsibilities of the Teacher's Profession;" Prof. Fish, of Rochester, "Object Teaching;" Rev. J. F. Dayan, of Ilion, subject, "School Systems of the Free and Slave States contrasted;" Dr. Casey, of Mohawk, subject, "Anatomy and Physiology, with suggestions in relation to Corporal Punishment;" Rev. Daniel Lord, of Warren, subject, "Observation."

There were about 260 teachers in attendance. The lectures were largely attended. The general interest in teachers' institutes seems to be increasing from year to year. These institutes were not managed with direct reference to the education of teachers in the sciences, but more especial attention was given to instructing them in the best methods of *imparting* knowledge and securing correct discipline.

DETAIL OF LABORS.—There are nine towns in this assembly district, containing, in the aggregate, 98 school districts. It is our custom in visiting schools to occupy a half day with each school, and, if possible, to visit each school twice each term. At the time of our first visit, we usually have the teacher go through with the principal classes in the manner practiced by him from day to day. During these exercises, we take the privilege of making such suggestions as we may deem important; also note down the standing of the different classes, and the leading features of the school. In our second visit we usually examine the classes, and give the teachers and school credit in proportion to the advancement which may have been made from the time of our last visit. In our opinion, one visit a year, or one visit a term, amounts to but very little good in districts where they have the bad habit of changing teachers every term. We usually invite, and frequently succeed, in getting trustees to visit their schools with us.

It is our custom to meet teachers twice each year for examinations. In the spring we have classes in each town. In the fall we attend to the examinations at the institutes. We usually devote, at least, one day to the examination of each class; one-half of which time we have occupied in writing answers to a printed list of questions, with which we provide each teacher. The papers containing the answers are preserved for future reference.

We have recently introduced, as a new feature in our field of labors, the publication, from week to week, of reports of school visitations, doings of teachers' associations, together with such matter of educational importance as we may see fit to furnish. We have also prepared several lectures upon topics connected with common school interests, which we occasionally deliver as circumstances may seem to favor.

Believing our common schools to be the real safeguard of free institutions, and the only schools which are within the reach of the mass of the people, and feeling that their commonness has caused them to be too



little appreciated, I have thought that there was, perhaps, no way in which I could be of more service to the common school interest than to attempt, through the means of the local press, extra teachers' institutes, associations, public examinations, and lectures, to do some little toward arousing not only teachers, but the people, from that wide-spread apathy and inattention into which very many have seemingly fallen, in regard to interests which are vital alike to themselves, our common schools, and our country.

We also improve with pleasure each opportunity to visit the institutes and schools of other counties, and are thus enabled to gain much valuable information in relation to school management; also to keep ourselves clear of the notion that the field of our supervision constitutes the hub of educational excellence.

It is deemed quite unnecessary to report to the Department further in detail of our common official duties—such as attending to apportionments, abstracts, alteration of school districts, &c., &c. We devote our entire time to the discharge of the duties of the office of school commissioner, and only regret our inability to do more.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

OLIVER B. BEALS,

*School Commissioner.*

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### JEFFERSON COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*:

The school commissioner for the first district of Jefferson Co., respectfully submits the following report:

**ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL.**—The attendance is fair as a whole. The least interest is often manifested by those living near school—as a portion of the inhabitants in villages. The reasons for non-attendance usually exist with the parents; pupils that play in the streets when they should be at school, or absent themselves day after day for trifling causes, do so because parents fail to see how any desire for knowledge, or discipline of mind, acquired at school, may be counteracted or lost by such absence; or because they really care so little for education, or know so little of the true course necessary to obtain it, that the children are left to consult their own convenience in these matters.

**RATE-BILLS** affect the attendance but little. I think the majority of poor children attend school pretty much the same as if there were no rate-bills. When inability to pay is given as a reason for absence from school, it is in most cases only an alleged cause; the *true* one being an indifference to school matters. Although an advocate of free schools, and in favor of the cheapest, widest spread, and the best system of edu-

cation; yet, I question whether a change from the present rate-bill to a free school system, would materially affect the attendance here.

SCHOOL HOUSES.—Of these we have a variety. The majority are what may be termed comfortable. We have "quite a good many" fine buildings, with play ground inclosed, and thrifty shade trees; and in some cases flowers are cultivated. We have also some houses that may properly be denominated poor. On the whole, the provisions in this respect are commendable.

TEACHERS.—The proportion of male to female teachers is, as 80 to 183. Many females continue teaching until they become well qualified; but the greater proportion of the males teach a few terms and then leave for some other calling. We have exceptions to this. A few make it the business of a lifetime; others teach sufficient to make themselves known and felt as educators. But one of the greatest drawbacks the educational interest has to encounter, is the fact that sufficient inducements are not offered to retain *more* of our better teachers in the service for a *longer time*.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES.—Union academy at Belleville is in a flourishing condition, and does much for our teachers. The number of private schools, I think, is yearly growing less. As common schools improve they are appreciated and patronized.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—District school libraries are of very little use, because they are not read. The number of volumes is yearly decreasing for want of care, being scattered and lost. Private libraries, periodicals and newspapers have taken their places, and furnish an abundance of reading matter for all classes.

SCHOOL APPARATUS.—Of this there is, in my opinion, a very great want in our schools. Some districts have a limited supply, a very few have a fair supply; but more have none at all, if we except the blackboard, and perhaps a small globe or map. If the library money could be *judiciously* expended for school apparatus, I think it would be much better appropriated than it is at present, and a deficiency in the provisions for education supplied. It might be well in such case to require the district to raise, and appropriate, an equal amount.

TEXT BOOKS.—Of text books, we have an approximation to a uniformity. We have endeavored on the one hand to keep up with the times in the introduction of school books, and on the other, to avoid their introduction merely to favor booksellers or other parties.

TRUSTEES.—There exists a difference of opinion, in different districts, in relation to whether one or three trustees should do the business. But I am pretty well persuaded that one trustee is enough; and that the defect in the law is, that any district is permitted to have more than one trustee. One gives closer attention to the business, and operates more for the interest of the district, because it is *his business*, and he alone is responsible. In districts where three trustees are elected, it often hap-

pens that one does the business and the rest manage to get up a fuss. I think most of the difficulties in districts originate here.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—The school commissioners of Jefferson county have given special attention to teachers' institutes, thinking in this way to reach many of the defects in our schools at once, polish and invigorate the teachers, and bring any suggestions or improvements to bear upon all, or nearly all, at the same time. Older teachers are constantly leaving the profession, and young and inexperienced persons are coming in to supply their places. These teachers may have a fair knowledge of books, but they are ignorant of many important things that contribute to their success. Although they have much to learn by actual teaching, the institute brings them in contact with teachers of ability and experience; shows them a variety of methods; gives them useful hints, which they can seize upon and use; points out to them their relative position among the teachers; and tells them much more effectively than words can tell, what they must do to keep up with the age and become successful educators of the young. The commissioners have given their personal attention to the management of the institutes, and have employed, as assistants, none but thoroughly competent and experienced persons; those who had no interest to serve but the interest of the teachers. We have held institutes spring and fall. In the fall we all come together at the county seat, have a grand educational gathering, a *good drill*, and a thorough examination. The examinations commence on Wednesday of the first week, and continue through the term, occupying an hour or more each day. They are both written and oral, and cover, as do all our examinations, the whole range of studies pursued in our schools. Our spring institutes are similar, except they are held in each assembly district. I use the plural *our*, because the commissioners of Jefferson county have always acted in concert, sometimes making the whole round of examinations together. In arranging for and conducting our institutes we have been liberal in our outlay, and the attendance has been correspondingly large; a considerably greater number having attended during the year than is required to fill the schools at any one time.

EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.—I have made it a rule for the past five years to require all persons desiring a license to pass an examination, without reference to age, qualifications, experience, pretensions or recommendations; and when a license expires, I require a re-examination. I do this for the purpose of keeping the teachers fresh and vigorous, free from rust, and familiar with the subjects they teach. They cannot evade an examination, and they prepare to meet it. I meet the teachers in classes in the different towns, and spend from one to three days in an examination, usually one day. These examinations are both written and oral, mostly written, with such remarks and suggestions in relation to teaching as I think proper. If any one evades the class, and calls at my office for a private examination, I never fail to give the *examination*.



If we find teachers deficient, we do not hesitate to refuse a license. This course caused quite a flutter at first, but the effect upon the teachers has been what we desired and anticipated—a better preparation before offering themselves, and a much more thorough fitness for their work. It may perhaps be uninteresting if I give a detail of our method of examination, and will only say that I regard frequent and thorough examinations so necessary for the promotion of sound education in our schools, that I have spend from 24 to 36 days each spring and fall in the examination of teachers.

VISITING SCHOOLS.—I have only to say in relation to this subject, that the time not spent in holding institutes, examining teachers, and attending to the other business pertaining to the office of school commissioner, I have spent, as far as I have been able to do, in visiting schools in the different parts of the district.

Feeling that the Department is doing an able and earnest work for the educational interests of the State, I desire to assist, as far as I can, in carrying out its policy, and making New York, as she is in other things, great in the moral and intellectual strength of her children.

Respectfully submitted.

HENRY H. SMITH,

*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction :*

In accordance with the requirement of the Department of Public Instruction, I herewith transmit my annual report in relation to the condition of the schools in the second assembly district of Jefferson county for the year ending September 30, 1862.

I have under my supervision one hundred and sixteen schools, taught by one hundred and thirty-seven teachers during six months or more of the year. There are actually employed two hundred and fifteen different teachers in these schools. Many who teach in the summer are not employed during the winter term, and so the majority of those who teach in the winter are not employed during the summer.

There have been employed fifty-eight male, and one hundred and fifty-seven female teachers. Of the males ten follow teaching as a profession. Some of the others are seeking permanent employment as instructors, but most of them follow the business only for the present, and avail themselves of the first good opportunity to engage in other and more lucrative pursuits.

Of the one hundred and fifty-seven female teachers, twenty have been employed for the last three years in the county, ten for the last two years, and seven during the last year. The others have taught from one to nine months each.

The highest salary paid to any male teacher is \$800 per year; the

highest paid to any female teacher is \$350 per annum. The average salary of male teachers in the winter term is nearly \$24 per month; of females for the same term about \$16 per month. The average for the summer term is much lower.

More than three-fourths of the teachers employed in this district attend the teachers' institute either in the fall or spring, and quite a large number attend both; and also the town associations held in the several towns during the year.

The examination of most of the teachers occurs during the session of the teachers' institute, although an appointment is made for each town, both in the spring and fall, to examine those who have not been previously licensed. In these inspections the candidates are subjected to a rigid and thorough examination in all the branches usually taught in our common schools, as well as in some of the higher or academical studies—reference being had to the character of the schools they respectively are to teach. None but those who are deemed well qualified receive a license. Fifty applicants have been rejected the past year. I regard this as one of the most important and responsible duties connected with the office—as one of the most important matters connected with the welfare of our schools and educational progress. This duty being faithfully performed, more than one-half the work is done to secure to the public good schools. Whatever else is neglected by a school commissioner, this duty *must* not be omitted. These examinations are both oral and written. I regard the written examination as a sure test of competency, or a want of competency. I have never had any difficulty, where candidates for licenses have felt aggrieved, and have petitioned to the district or public for sympathy in their embarrassed condition, to convince them “out of their own mouths,” and by the written documents in my possession, that the verdict was just.

I have granted but three first grade licenses during the year. I have, however, modified or changed the first grade from three years to one. Of this grade I have given some twenty-five. These are given only to those who have had some years' experience, and have been successful both in teaching and in disciplining and controlling *mind*. Fifty have received second, and the remainder third grade certificates.

I find the teachers in this district the best qualified to teach arithmetic and geography, and the most deficient in teaching English grammar, history, penmanship and reading. One of the greatest defects is in teaching the younger pupils. Instructors have not all learned that children have eyes and ears and hands, as well as memories, and that they should be taught as nature has indicated, through the medium of the senses first, that things come first and names afterwards. In our institutes, much information has been given in reference to the mode and manner of imparting instruction, so that we are approaching to something like system in the philosophy of teaching. Many of the

teachers are availing themselves of the advantages of some of the best works on education, such as "Page's Theory and Practice of Teaching," "Education, by Herbert Spencer," "Normal Methods," &c. There is a demand for a larger number of well qualified teachers in this county, and perhaps we compare favorably with other counties in this respect. Ten additional first class teachers could have found employment in my district the present term, at salaries varying from \$25 to \$35 per month.

There are but four or five graduates of the State Normal school employed in this district. With a single exception they are and have been successful, and in the case of failure the responsibility will rest quite as much upon the community as upon the teacher. They have invariably been present at our spring institutes in my district, and have rendered valuable service in conducting them. A diploma from the Normal school is nearly equivalent to success in this county.

There are in this district nine thousand children of school age, or who draw public money. Of this number, a fraction over six thousand, or a little more than two-thirds, attend the district school a part of the year. Allowing that twelve hundred attend the academies and private schools, it would leave every fourth child that does not attend school any portion of the year. When it is considered, however, that the school age includes those between four and twenty-one, it would leave but a very few, if any, between the ages of six and sixteen who do not attend school a portion of the year.

There can be but little doubt but that the rate bill has a tendency to diminish the attendance, and also to shorten the school term. A number of the districts continue the school just long enough to absorb the public money, and to secure the appropriation of the school fund the following year. Still, the public sentiment would be at the present time decidedly opposed to levying a tax upon the property to support the schools and make them free. Could this be done with the approval of an intelligent majority, it would add very materially, no doubt, to the advancement and elevation of our schools.

Of the 117 school houses in this district, twenty are well adapted to the purposes for which they were designed; twenty-five are mere apologies for school houses, are exponents of the wisdom or the folly of a former age, are left standing and occupied for the good they have done, and for the reverence which we in this country feel and exhibit towards things venerable.

When those whose associations, sympathies, and pockets are intimately connected with these tenements shall have "gone the way of all the earth," then, no doubt, will some ruthless hand be raised to blot from the memory these emblems of the pride of a simpler and perchance a better age. The remaining 72 are in good repair, but many of them are far from being convenient houses.

About one-third of the districts are provided with spacious and



pleasant playgrounds, neatly fenced, planted with trees, and a few of them have plats of ground for the cultivation of flowers. One-third have playgrounds, but not inclosed; the remaining third are located upon the edge of the road, without any playground but the highway.

Seventy of the school houses are furnished with privies, and convenient wood-houses. All but ten are supplied with blackboards; one-third with a globe and maps. Ten are provided with a philosophical and chemical apparatus, costing from \$25 to \$100. One hundred and eleven of the school houses are warmed with stoves; six with furnaces. Nearly all can be ventilated by lowering the upper sash, or other suitable means. A few are provided with ventilators in the ceiling or wall.

During the year I have made 183 visits; have been accompanied by the trustees and inhabitants in visiting fifty schools. The largest number that have accompanied me at any one visit is forty-five. A part of the visits have been previously advertised in the county papers. In these notices I have requested the patrons of the schools, and others, to meet me; and the result has been exceedingly gratifying.

In 5 of the villages of this district there should be union graded schools. It would do away with most of the private schools, and furnish a more thorough and systematic course of instruction, and withal, it would cost the people less than the present mode. I trust that Watertown—the largest village in the county—will soon take the lead in this *democratic and economical* system.

I find that the district libraries have nearly accomplished their mission. In a few localities their value is properly appreciated, and they are exerting a good influence. But in most of the districts the books are not drawn from the library. Would it not be well to adopt the plan of our Canadian neighbors in the expenditure of the library money? Each school district then, by raising a specified amount by a tax on the property of the district, can draw the amount from the school fund, for the purchase of philosophical or chemical apparatus, or library books.

In most of the districts a judicious selection is made in the choice of trustees. Men who have a direct interest in the school, and who are willing to make some sacrifice of time, have quite generally been chosen. In more than one-half of the districts a blank book is provided, in which the teacher makes the entries.

I think I can safely say that our schools are advancing and improving. Much has been done during the last five years; but there is work yet to be done before our schools attain the elevated character and position to which they ought to be raised.

J. WINSLOW,  
*School Commissioner.*

## THIRD DISTRICT.

TO the Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Supt. Public Instruction* :

I transmit herewith a brief report on public instruction within my jurisdiction:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—The age of pupils attending school during the summer term will range from five to twelve years, and those during the winter from five to eighteen. While there are many children growing up in ignorance who might avail themselves of the means of instruction, yet I do not know a single instance where such children are withheld from school on account of rate-bills or exemptions.

The schools under my charge are mostly in the rural districts; the people are wealthy, and trustees have long since learned the justice and propriety of being liberal in their exemptions. But I have been of the opinion, for many years, that if the public school moneys were apportioned upon a different basis its influence would secure an education for thousands, who will otherwise grow up in idleness, ignorance and crime. Therefore I most respectfully recommend that the school moneys be apportioned upon the average attendance for six months, rather than upon the number of resident pupils in the district.

SCHOOL HOUSES.—The school houses of long standing are badly located, poorly constructed, and poorly ventilated—warmed by stoves, and cooled by absent window lights and other apertures of the building. The sites are contracted, and the outbuildings must necessarily correspond. I am happy to report that school houses of a recent erection represent a more liberal and enlightened policy than those formerly erected. Many have been built within the past two years, and many more are in process of erection, while others, in my opinion, will go *up* when the war goes *down*.

In nearly every school I find a blackboard, but I find very few globes, maps or charts. The uniformity of text books adopted is as follows: Town's series of Readers and Speller, Monteith's and McNally's system of Geography, Weld's Grammar, Adams' Arithmetic, Davies' Algebra, Fulton and Eastman's Book-keeping, Monteith's History, &c., all of which are taught in most of the schools at least during the winter term.

TEACHERS.—The proportion of female teachers employed in our schools to that of males is nearly three to one, and their average salaries will amount to some eight dollars per month, including board. Females are making teaching a permanent employment, being engaged from six to eight months in the year; while male teachers, with but few exceptions, are employed only during the winter months, receiving from eighteen to thirty dollars per month. The number of teachers under my jurisdiction who attended the two teachers' institutes was 135. Teachers are subjected to an examination at least once a year, a majority of whom are examined at teachers' institutes, and said examinations are mostly

reduced to writing, which is believed to be the most thorough and practicable method. We find our teachers better qualified to instruct in mathematics than in any other branch of science, while in English grammar they are much more deficient. The number of teachers licensed annually in this district is about 175; of that number about 50 receive the third grade, 100 the second, and 25 the first.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—There are comparatively few private schools in this locality, which you will see by reference to my abstract report, not as many as in former years, which is owing chiefly to the improvement of our public schools.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—I have nothing favorable to report relative to these libraries. That they have done good no one will dispute, but they are among “the things that were,” dead, and apparently so far past recovery that no power can restore them to their former life, usefulness and prosperity. There is, indeed, but little interest among the people in regard to their school libraries; they are unwilling to appropriate one dollar of the library money for books whenever they can avoid it. I frequently visit and examine the libraries of the different school districts, and find but few books in proportion to the number of volumes found upon the catalogue, and these few are dirty, ragged and valueless, while of those found missing the librarian knows nothing, neither does he care. I do not say that there are not some honorable exceptions to the above description given, and many valuable books in the libraries, but they are being scattered, destroyed and lost, and will soon all be absorbed, should the present system of conducting them much longer continue. Perhaps the Department may conclude from this report upon the school libraries, that the people in this district are a benighted people; but not so. They are a reading and an intelligent people, and are not content to appropriate their leisure hours in reading some musty old library book, but are eagerly grasping for something new. I have found, by visiting the inhabitants in their homes, that very many have neat and popular libraries of their own, and in almost every house are found a daily, and from one to two weekly newspapers; and in addition to this are found the Atlantic Monthly, Harper’s Monthly, Godey’s, Peterson’s, &c., which furnish them with so much reading matter that they have no time or disposition to make frequent drafts on the school libraries.

TRUSTEES.—The sentiment of the people in regard to the election of one or three trustees is various. I have labored to induce them to believe that one trustee would better subserve the interests of their districts than three, and in most instances when the experiment has been tried, the people have approved of it. The proportion of the districts, the people of which have adopted the one trustee policy, is about one-half, and the prospect is that this policy will soon prevail generally.

TEACHERS’ INSTITUTES.—The last teachers’ institute for the county was



held in Watertown, in the month of October last. Its session was 12 days. The commissioners were assisted by the following persons as instructors: R. Ellis, Prof. of Mathematics in Union academy at Belleville; Rev. T. A. Babcock, of Watertown; and the Rev. J. W. Armstrong, of Theresa, Jefferson county. No more profound, efficient and lucid teachers could have been secured in northern New York. The institute was divided into three divisions, each division receiving instruction the same hour in all the common and higher English branches, together with the natural sciences. The names of the lecturers and their subjects will be given by Commissioner Winslow. The number of teachers in attendance was some 350. Only one-fourth in attendance were males. I venture the assertion that there was never a body of teachers collected together more attentive to instruction, more intelligent or more fair. I am happy to report, also, that this institute was a success. The hall, though the largest in the county, was filled at our evening lectures, and among the audience were our lawyers, doctors and divines, together with our editors and officers, both civil and military. The plan of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, authorizing the commissioners to grant "special certificates" to those attending the institute ten full days, worked admirably. It brought out a majority of our ambitious and most successful teachers, those who would make teaching a permanent employment. I do not know how much power the Department has in the absence of legislative enactment, but I do know if the attendance at teachers' institutes was made a necessity, it would advance the interest of the schools. In my judgment, there is no one element in our educational system so well calculated to socialize, polish, refine and elevate the character and standing of our teachers, and consequently improve our schools, as is this means of instruction. To this end it is earnestly desired that the State shall continue its appropriation to the institutes.

**SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.**—The labor to be performed by the school commissioner in my jurisdiction is arduous. The district possesses an extent of 35 miles in diameter, and over 100 miles in circumference, containing 132 school districts. It has been my purpose to reach every school district at least twice a year, but owing to severe weather, frozen mud and deep snows, I have been unable to visit them all during the winter months. Among the many prominent objects in visiting schools, the following are, in my opinion, of special importance: a correct system of discipline, proper classification, and practical instruction, and I flatter myself that I have fully witnessed a realization of my efforts in this direction. I have made it a special point in visitation to bring before the teachers the subject of "object teaching," to induce them to adopt it so far as is practicable in the schools of the rural districts, and many have practiced it with some success, but their limited knowledge of the subject, and the necessary apparatus for primary instruction, such as the key book, charts, &c., render it extremely difficult and embarrassing. I

deem this new method of instruction, if properly conducted, one of the greatest improvements of the age, and if a training school could be established in every county, it would be money wisely appropriated. In glancing back over the past three years that it has been my humble lot to officiate as school commissioner in this district, and considering the great deficiency in the qualifications of teachers at the commencement of my official term, not only in knowledge of books, and a due appreciation of the dignity of the teacher's office, but in that peculiar ability so requisite to properly develop mind by clear and lucid demonstration, teaching their pupils to think correctly and express accurately their thoughts, and notwithstanding that the public mind has been so diverted from our institutions of learning by the war, I am most happy to be able to report that our teachers and our schools have rapidly improved, and that public instruction in every department is gradually but surely rising in interest. And, in conclusion, allow me to express my earnest desire that our public schools will soon be able to vie with our higher seminaries of learning; that they will stand up in beauty and in strength, to be admired by the philanthropist, the patriot, and the scholar.

WM. HAWES,

*School Commissioner.*

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### KINGS COUNTY—RURAL DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. RICE :

Dear Sir—I would hereby respectfully report to you the condition of the schools in my district. My district, as you are aware, is small, comprising the five country towns of Kings county, and containing only fourteen school districts. Twenty-one teachers are employed in these schools; sixteen are males and five females. The females are all assistants, with one exception. All, male and female, are teachers by profession—teaching the entire year. Most of them are well educated, and manifest great zeal in their calling. The males receive from four to six hundred a year, the females from two to three.

According to the census, there are 4166 persons in the district between the ages of five and eighteen, of whom 1831 have actually attended the public schools within the last school year. You will see by these figures that half of the entire number of persons in the county, of school age, attend, either in the public or private schools.

There is one academy and fourteen private schools in the district, but they are all poorly patronized, as many of our older scholars prefer to go to the larger and more popular schools of the city, where they can enjoy lectures and better means of illustration.

There is one *colored* school. This I was enabled to establish last year through the kindness and liberality of Mr. Van Dyck, who apportioned

it one teacher's quota, and authorized me to give it money for fifty scholars. This, with contributions of friends of the school, was sufficient to employ a qualified teacher nearly four months. There were fifty-four scholars in attendance, and the progress they made in their studies was as great as that of any other school of the same grade. I sincerely hope this school may become a permanent thing, as it is greatly needed here.

There has been one new school house built; and four others have been repaired and remodeled.

The district libraries are large; most of them well taken care of, and pretty well read.

We have never had a teachers' institute, for the want of a sufficient number of teachers. Nor will it be possible to organize one under the new order for the same reason. There are institutes held in Brooklyn, to which all the teachers can go if so inclined. So that the need of institutes in the county is not so great as in many parts of the State.

I visit all the schools from four to eight times annually; making appointments when possible, so as to get the attendance of trustees and patrons. I call out various classes and examine them myself. In this way I am much better able to judge of the progress they are making. I find this mode of procedure acts beneficially on both teacher and scholar, as they are anxious to make a creditable appearance before me and their friends.

There is certainly more interest felt now by parents in the education of the young than formerly. This is shown by a wish to secure better teachers, by improving their school houses and grounds, by getting better books and apparatus, and by a better *personal* attendance upon the various exercises of the schools. Still they are far, very far, from what I could desire them to be; and they are not yet what I hope to see them become.

Respectfully your ob't servant,

H. S. BARTLETT,

*School Commissioner.*

FLATBUSH, October 23, 1862.

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## LEWIS COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

The undersigned begs leave to transmit to the Department the following facts and statistics relative to the first district of the county of Lewis:

The schools in the central and richest towns are much smaller than they are in the border towns. Those towns peopled by "native born" are in the habit of raising rate-bills for each term; and a rate-bill does not diminish in the least the attendance upon school; but in those towns



where the foreign population predominates, rate-bills are not usually raised; and when so raised they have a tendency to diminish the attendance at school.

Perhaps two-thirds of the school houses in this district are fair buildings, arranged conveniently, with sheds and proper out-houses. The apparatus is generally limited to a blackboard, and sometimes the addition of a globe with some series of maps. The text books have been of almost all kinds; but this difficulty is fast being obviated through our teachers' institutes.

The schools in this district are all taught, during the summer, by females; and during the winter term the schools are taught by males and females, of each about an equal number. One-half of these teachers make it a profession, the other half are transient, who teach a term or two and leave it for others.

The teachers' institute was held for a session of thirty days, and attended by upwards of eighty teachers, who manifested a great deal of interest in the exercises of the institute. During this session a thorough review of orthography, reading, mental and written arithmetic, geography, grammar, civil government, history and algebra was had, and we firmly believe that every teacher who attended said review will go forth to his work feeling the dignity of a true teacher. Rev. J. W. Armstrong lectured during one week upon geography, grammar, pronunciation; Rev. J. Bailey upon the character of a teacher; and E. W. Keyes, deputy superintendent, upon education.

During the past year there has been a marked change in our schools for the better, and I can attribute that change to our "institutes;" for wherever I find teachers that have been drilled and disciplined in the institutes, I find that they have system in all their arrangements; that they know what should be accomplished and how to accomplish it. Our teachers have been very deficient in orthography, and it has been with much difficulty they could teach it properly; but the "institute" has developed in them the proper faculty for teaching it. Arithmetic has been taught better than any other branch, and in many cases it has been made a hobby; but teachers are beginning to feel that they must have no particular hobby, but deal with all subjects impartially.

The subject of one or three trustees has been agitated; the majority of districts thinking three better than one; but in those districts where one has been elected, and that one acted impartially with a view of doing all the good he could in his official capacity, perfect satisfaction prevails. I am strongly in favor of one trustee, and earnestly hope that all districts will finally consent to elect but one.

The libraries are of but little account, and in most of districts they are growing less in numbers—but little care is manifest in their preservation.

There are but five private schools, and those are generally in our

villages, where the wants of pupils are more than can really be supplied in the district school.

During the past year I have made nearly two hundred visits in schools, each of these visits occupied one-half of a day; and during these visits it has been my intention to ascertain accurately the condition of schools and the advancement being made therein. From the best information I can glean, I come to this conclusion, that teachers are trying to qualify themselves better, and, as a natural consequence, the schools under their charge are being elevated.

HENRY C. NORTHAM,  
*School Commissioner.*

November 26, 1862.

## SECOND DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

Sir—In compliance with the instructions from your department, the undersigned submits the following report:

The second district of Lewis county comprises the nine northern towns of said county, and contains one hundred and fifteen school districts and parts of districts.

The number of children of school age, according to the statistical report herewith transmitted, is 5,548, of whom 3,746 have attended school a portion of the time within the past year.

In regard to the time of attendance of pupils, I am satisfied our reports are far from being correct; and until some different plan is adopted for reporting upon this item, the blanks will be filled with the guesses of trustees.

The careless way of keeping the register of attendance, and the neglect of the trustees to furnish proper books, the frequent change of teachers, and the consequent loss of rolls will account for this. In the 95 districts the school houses of which are located within the county, 22 have had free schools, and 72 have been supported, in part, by rate-bills. One district has not reported.

The average time the schools have been in session is about seven months.

Public sentiment in regard to rate-bills is divided. In towns mainly settled by a foreign population, the promise of a rate-bill often interferes materially with the attendance; but in the older districts, where a free school is rarely had (though the burden frequently bears heavily upon a few), I think it is borne with cheerfulness. Of the 96 school houses, 11 are built of logs, 75 are frame, 3 brick, and 6 are stone. These are in every condition, from the miserable hovel that stands by the roadside to that which is an ornament to the village and district. Those erected within the last few years are substantial and commodious structures.

They are usually located with some regard to taste, and supplied with the necessary appendages and modern improvements.

Very many of the older class of houses are in good condition, and tolerably well arranged, yet often destitute of out-buildings, and generally located in the immediate vicinity of the road, with no inclosures or playgrounds. Some recently built are warmed by furnaces, and ventilated by means of openings in the ceiling, or dropping the upper sash of the window; stoves are generally used, however, for heating purposes, and those houses not furnished with window springs depend for pure air upon the friendly gaps that time has made in the structure; and not unfrequently there is an ample supply.

Of apparatus, 75 per cent. are furnished with class bells, 25 per cent. with phonological charts, outline maps, and globes, and all have a full or partial supply of blackboards.

Our schools contain children of all ages, from the French or German boy of three years, who is sent only to learn how to articulate English, to the full-grown Hibernian, who sees the necessity of making some atonement for past negligence or want of opportunity.

Six years since, our schools contained as many varieties of text-books as were then published, and a school that did not possess two or three on each topic was an exception. The result was a multiplication of classes, waste of time, and confusion worse confused. This was caused mainly by traveling book-venders, who had imposed upon the credulity or misconception of teachers.

During the winter of 1857, we applied to the board of supervisors to recommend a list of text-books to be used in the common schools of the county.

The following list was named, and is now in general use: Wright's Orthography, Town's Readers, Webster's Spelling Book, McNally and Monteith's Geography, Weld's Grammar, Davies' Mental Arithmetic, Adams' Written Arithmetic, Parker's Philosophy, Willard's History, Young's Civil Government, Cutter's Physiology, Fulton and Eastman's Book-keeping, Davies' Algebra and Bourdon, Davies' Legendre, Page's Theory and Practice of Teaching.

We have recently introduced the Spencerian system of penmanship.

It was not claimed that all of these works were the best published, yet they were considered very good, and a large per centage of them were already in the schools, thus avoiding a change so radical as to be unacceptable to parents.

Orthography, spelling, reading, penmanship, Geography, arithmetic, mental and written, and grammar, are taught in nearly all our schools to a greater or less extent. The higher English, mathematics, including algebra and geometry, together with astronomy, physiology, philosophy, history, civil government, and book-keeping, are taught extensively in our best schools.



That our schools are better than they were, I think no one who honestly investigates can deny. From the inauguration of the present system of supervision, there has been a manifest improvement in methods of teaching, and a commendable zeal with the mass of the teachers to deserve well of the parents; this, with uniformity in text books, teachers' institutes, associations and conventions, has brought incalculable good to the schools. We have, however, many inferior schools, and until the State is willing to provide, in every county, more extended means for the professional instruction of teachers, we shall never reach that standard of excellence so necessary to the full development of our beneficent scheme of popular education.

The majority of our teachers are boys and girls not yet out of their teens; and, while I can commend their zeal to do good, very many of them have never enjoyed an opportunity for improvement beyond a second class common school. Such teachers can have no standard of excellence, nothing to compare themselves with, and as a necessary consequence are without method or system, and many of them ignorant of any rational means of school government. Teachers' institutes, associations and conventions will do much to aid those whose natural endowments render them "apt to teach," yet this class will never be found in sufficient numbers to meet the demands of our schools.

Of 182 teachers employed during the past year, 31 are males, and 151 females; 178 have been licensed by local officers, 3 by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and one is a graduate of the Normal school. I think not over 30 per cent of those who teach make it their permanent employment, and the greater proportion of these are ladies. Among the males are some very fine teachers, yet most of them teach only the winter term, and regard the business as a stepping stone to something more permanent and satisfactory. The wages of female teachers range from eight to twenty-five dollars per month, exclusive of board. The pay of male teachers for the winter term, exclusive of board, will average twenty dollars.

The average attendance of teachers upon the institute for the past six years is about 60 per cent of the number necessary to supply the schools; 50 per cent is the lowest, and 75 per cent the highest number we have reached, which, considering that our sessions have continued six weeks, we think a very fair response.

In our class drills, we examine mainly with reference to the school the candidate desires to teach, requiring written answers on some topics, and oral on others.

At present, mathematics are the best taught branches, and orthography, reading, map-drawing, history, and civil government the most neglected.

The notion that pupils must pass over so many chapters, without regard to the execution, is a fault too common; and the idea that to know

history and civil government is masculine, and not necessarily a part of the education of every teacher, has prevailed to some extent. Map-drawing, from memory, has been practiced extensively at our institute, and thus introduced into the schools with much advantage.

Our practice is to give third grade certificates to all whose schools we have never visited, without regard to literary qualifications, and the same to those whose knowledge and ability merit nothing higher. We have endeavored to exercise caution in this matter, and probably one-fourth the number now in our schools have third-class licenses; about sixty per cent have the second class; ten per cent the first class for one year, and five per cent the same for three years.

LOWVILLE ACADEMY.—Large additions have recently been made to the academy buildings. The north wing contains a lecture-room, laboratory, philosophical room, library, a general study room, Mystic hall, and commercial rooms. The south wing contains a general study room for ladies, private room for ladies, ladies' society hall, office, principal's rooms, boarding hall, &c. There is also an extensive chapel and private study rooms for gentlemen.

The recent additions to the buildings increase its capacity nearly three-fold—making them equal, in size and convenience, to the largest institutions of the State.

The academy library is large, and well supplied with classical and scientific works. There is also a fine library belonging to the Mystic society. The apparatus embraces all needful instruments for illustrating the course of mathematics, optics, electricity, galvanism, electro-magnetism, &c. There is also a needful supply of astronomical apparatus, and the mathematical department is well supplied with instruments; among which are a surveyor's chain and compass, sextant, and other field instruments. Abundant means are provided for chemical and philosophical experiments—the apparatus being very extensive and constantly increasing. The course of instruction embraces all the branches taught in the higher seminaries.

There are two courses of study, denominated the classical and scientific. Upon completion of either, the student is awarded a diploma. Those not wishing to take either course can select such studies as they desire to pursue. There is also a commercial course, where penmanship and book-keeping are taught.

The teachers' class, organized pursuant to the direction of the Regents of the University, has made commendable progress—the candidates who presented themselves for examination acquitting themselves with honor. The practical benefit to the common schools of teachers' classes, where both the theory and practice of teaching are inculcated, is undoubted. The positive demand of our schools, as it appears to me, is the enlargement of these institutions to the dignity of county normal schools, where the science of school teaching shall be made a specialty. We shall

then send forth a class of young persons who will be reformers. The endowments of the institution amount to about six thousand dollars.

The faculty consists of a principal, a professor of mathematics, a professor of penmanship and book-keeping, a preceptress and assistant, and two teachers of music. The rates of tuition are about the same as in other academic institutions.

The average salary of the teachers is about four hundred dollars per year. The number employed at present is six.

There are but four Normal-graduates in this county, and but two now teaching in this district; more have received diplomas from that institution, but greater inducements have called them to other parts of the State. Under the old system of supervision none were sent from this district, and I think of but two from the county. The Normal school is being better known and appreciated; and we have now in said school, through the kindness of Prof. Cochran, double the quota to which we are entitled.

There have been six private schools in this district within the past year, with a gross attendance of two hundred and thirty-five pupils, which is much the same as in other years. There are no parochial schools, neither any demand for schools especially for colored children.

The number of volumes reported in the district libraries, is 8231; which is about the same as in 1856. Hundreds of volumes are destroyed or lost every year, through the negligence of librarians; not one in ten of whom has any catalogue of books in his office; neither is there any attempt to keep a record of the books lent or returned. In the rural districts the books are more generally read and valued, but the cheapness and convenience of newspapers and periodicals has nearly supplanted the district library; besides, the act allowing the trustees to use the money for teachers' wages prevents the purchase of new books, thus rendering the library uninteresting to a large class of readers. The character of the books is generally unexceptionable. Of the foreign population, about twenty-five per cent of the families take some weekly or monthly publication; of the native born, not less than ninety-eight per cent.

The proportion of the districts having but one trustee, is nearly one-fourth. Many are opposed to the centralization of power, though in districts where it has been fairly tried I believe it gives better satisfaction. In districts having three, the business is rarely done according to law, the one most willing having the work to do, besides the additional labor of obtaining the sanction of the others to his proceedings. The combined wisdom of three men may be necessary to transact the business of a district, yet the instances are rare where they meet by previous notice, as the law contemplates; and more district quarrels result from disagreement among trustees than from any other assignable cause.

The last session of our teachers institute was held at Lowville, com-



mencing September 22d, and continued thirty days. The commissioners were assisted by L. W. Clark, of Lowville, a graduate of the Normal school. The institute was divided into three departments, according to the qualifications of the teachers, the commissioners taking each a division and the assistant the other. The session was devoted to a thorough review of all the branches required to be taught in the common schools of the county. Classes were formed, and recitations had, and the school conducted upon the Normal plan as near as our circumstances would warrant. We have had a less number of public lectures than usual, owing to the pressure of class exercises, the evenings being employed in the preparation of lessons. We have endeavored to inculcate both the theory and practice of teaching; and though our sessions are usually weeks of hard work, for both teachers and taught, more has been done for our schools in the way of practical reform than through any or all other appliances. This is the sixth term of the kind we have held in so many years, and I believe the institute is more in favor than at any former period. The attendance last term was about ninety, (fifty per cent,) and the greater proportion attended the whole term. The Rev. J. W. Armstrong, of Theresa, lectured before the institute upon the following named subjects: "Grammar and its Application," "Astronomy," "Physical Geography," and "The Philosophy of Light and Color;" Rev. Mr. Bailey, of Lowville, on the "Responsibility of the Teacher;" and the Hon. Emerson W. Keyes, Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction, on a subject entitled "Life in Education, and Education in Life."

The labor performed by the undersigned has been distributed as follows: I have visited every school in my district twice, save a few where the term was too short to enable me to reach them in time, and have generally spent the half-day. In about one-fourth of these visits I have been accompanied by the trustees or other persons. On these occasions I have endeavored to point out the faults, and commend the success of teachers and pupils; and, in fine, to inculcate method, system, discipline, thoroughness and conscientiousness on the part of all concerned. My practice is to hold examinations in every town in the spring, and the same in the fall in towns not convenient to the institute; teachers in the districts close at hand are invited to take part in the general examination at the institute, which occupies four days preceding its close. They are generally, however, examined separately. I have resurveyed and described the boundaries of twelve school districts, consolidated two, organized one, and altered six. I have taught one division of our institute during a session of six weeks, attended our educational conventions, and one school celebration; the remaining time has been spent in apportioning the school fund, perfecting the abstract of district reports, and doing such other business as came within the sphere of my official duties.

I have thus given an imperfect synopsis of the "situation" in this district, and though I find much to condemn, there is also cause for con-

gratulation in the zeal evinced by our teachers to acquire that more extended knowledge commensurate with the wants of the incoming age, and the happiness and welfare of our reunited and again glorious fatherland.

Yours respectfully,

WAYNE CLARK,

*School Commissioner.*

COPENHAGEN, *December 10, 1862.*

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## LIVINGSTON COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

*LIMA, December 26, 1862.*

HON. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Public Instruction :*

Sir—In addition to the statistical and financial abstract of trustees' reports forwarded last month, the following report is respectfully submitted:

SCHOOL HOUSES, FURNITURE, &c.—In the nine towns composing the 1st assembly district of Livingston county, may be found nearly every variety of school houses, from the new, tasteful and substantially built edifice, with every needed appendage, to those dilapidated dwarf huts, once honorable as pioneers, but which have outlived their usefulness, and to which the commissioner is especially urgent in his solicitations for trustees, tax-payers and patrons to accompany him when the mercury is nearest that character significant of the value of the old structures. The latter class were growing rapidly and beautifully less until the present year, but now, in most cases, "war and heavy taxes" is the argument that gives a decided negative to all propositions for new school buildings. One log school house yet remains to tell its tale of times anterior to saw-mills.

In November last, I consolidated districts No. 4 and No. 13, in the town of Leicester. A good substantial church, standing midway between the two miserable old school houses, was donated to the district for a school house, and ex-Lieutenant Governor George W. Patterson has made a free-will offering of the site. The trustee hired a teacher at forty dollars per month, and the new district is assuming, in its infancy, an enviable position among the schools in that town.

Many districts are supplied with globes, maps, charts, &c., and although a few have none of these, yet every school house has a black-board, that most essential article of furniture for school rooms.

The lack of necessary outbuildings is confined mostly to those districts which lack a comfortable house.

Believing that good teachers and good schools, poor teachers and poor schools, stand related to each other as cause and effect, persevering efforts have been made to raise the standard of our schools by increasing

the efficiency of the teachers. Foremost among the means for the accomplishment of this result, stand our teachers' institutes. These annual gatherings in our county have, for the past two years, exceeded even the sanguine anticipations of the commissioners in the numbers in attendance, the interest manifested, and the results exhibited in the school room. In the circulars calling the institute, and sent to both patrons and teachers, trustees are invited to come at any time during the session, and select teachers from among those in attendance, rather than employ those who, by applying for situations during the session of the institute, evince more zeal for dollars than for knowledge. Many teachers were thus engaged, and the practice of prospecting for schools during the institute is nearly obsolete.

Instead of meeting the teachers in each town on a specified day for examination for the summer schools, the commissioner of the second district and myself called four spring institutes this year in as many different points in the county; and the numbers present, and the utility of these preparatory drills, seem to warrant their continuance.

A large majority of our teachers, even in the winter schools, are females. Their success justifies their employment. The demand for capable and successful teachers is fully equal to the supply, and cases are not rare in which ladies receive a dollar a day. While first-rate teachers of both sexes command as much or more than formerly, "inferior grades have suffered a decline."

Two academies in this assembly district have been selected by the Regents of the University for the instruction of common school teachers, viz.: the Genesee Wesleyan seminary at Lima, and the Genesee academy.

I was present at the examination of the teachers' class in Lima, taught by Prof. Case; and the thoroughness of his teaching placed this class in brilliant contrast with the class of the previous year. I am inclined to think that Prof. Case's class is an exception, and that while the amount paid to each academy in this county for the instruction of twenty teachers is in excess of the sum given by the State for the instruction of more than two hundred teachers at the institute, the institute is usually of far more practical importance than all the teachers' classes combined. Some arrangement is imperatively demanded whereby teachers may leave these schools to attend the institute without incurring the risk of a reprimand or expulsion.

Private schools are rarely met with, and are only found in districts whose school houses are either too small or too dilapidated to comfortably accommodate the pupils.

The district school libraries are very generally neglected; and, in many instances, where years ago more than 200 volumes were in the library, less than 100 can now be found, and these are seldom disturbed,



if we take the testimony of the cobwebs and accumulated dust which envelop them.

Newspapers, magazines, and the current literature of the day have almost entirely superceded school libraries as reading matter for both young and old. Private libraries are common, and are every year becoming more so. In view of these facts, the propriety of continuing the appropriation for district libraries seems at least doubtful.

The law of 1858, leaving it optional with districts to have one or three trustees, has produced different results in different districts. Some adopted the one-trustee system at first, and have since steadily adhered to it; others still cling to the old method; and still others, vascillating between the two, are constantly changing from one to three trustees, and from three to one, often finding themselves with but two trustees, who, disagreeing, hire each a teacher, or refuse to hire any. Some remedy is demanded, so that a law designed to advance the interests of schools shall not, as in the cases mentioned, prove a bar to progress.

Those districts most earnest in educational reform, and which sustain our best schools, have generally but one trustee. In less than one-eighth of the districts have the trustees complied with No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

In conclusion, I will only add, that among the sure indications of progress in our schools may be mentioned the increasing interest of patrons, and greater punctuality in attendance of pupils, attributable largely, without doubt, to the increased earnestness and efficiency of teachers.

FRANKLIN B. FRANCIS,

*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *State Superintendent of Public Instruction* :

Sir—In compliance with your request, I herewith transmit the following brief report:

There are one hundred school houses within the bounds of the assembly district; about one-half of which are comfortable, convenient and well adapted to the noble purpose for which they are used; and generally supplied with apparatus to the extent of blackboard, globe and a few maps. The other half are old, badly located buildings; with poorly arranged, but *too* fully ventilated rooms, without furniture save a blackboard. But these are rapidly giving place to new and commodious buildings. Several have been built during the past summer—three in the town of Springwater—notwithstanding the war. Out-buildings are generally out of repair, and too frequently badly located. The average attendance is about twenty-five, being larger in winter than summer. Too many (in my judgment) very young children are found in attendance; some under four years of age, and *many* under six. Winter schools are composed of pupils between the ages of eight and eighteen; summer

schools of those between four and fourteen. But my experience as a teacher, and my acquaintance as a school officer, tell me that the great want of our schools, the main hindrance to their success and prosperity, is a lack of *energetic, earnest, thoroughly* qualified teachers. Where I find such, I invariably find a good school. Such teachers are not plenty, for many of them are driven to other fields of labor in consequence of the parsimony and carelessness of trustees and patrons. Efforts, calculated to arouse parents and guardians to the importance of sustaining a good school, are, in my opinion, in the right direction. About four-fifths of the teachers are females; but they are generally as well qualified and as successful as males. A majority of the teachers, whom I have licensed, have read Page's Theory and Practice of Teaching, or other works on the science of teaching, and several take the N. Y. Teacher.

There is but one union school, and that is located in the village of Mount Morris.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—No one seems to know or care much about them; very few children are in the habit of drawing books. But few additions are made, as nearly all of the library money is applied to the purchase of school apparatus, or the payment of teachers' wages.

TRUSTEES.—There is a wide difference of opinion as to which is preferable, one or three trustees. I think a small majority now have *one* trustee. All agree that if the *right* man can be obtained, *one* is better than *three*. But if the sole trustee happens to be so ignorant or selfish as to place his son or daughter in the school against the known wishes of a majority of the districts, then trouble arises. Those schools having one trustee, are more frequently visited by him than those having three are by them, or any one of them.

COMMISSIONER'S DUTIES.—I find by visiting the schools of the assembly district—which I have ever done at least once each term—that much good results from the instruction received at teachers' institutes and drills. I find teachers practicing the forms and teaching the principles which they have learned at these gatherings. I do not practice the plan of most commissioners, of meeting teachers in their several towns for inspection, but call them together every spring, at one of two or three central places, for drill and inspection. Each of these drills continues four or five days; and they are remarkably well attended, averaging about seventy at each. At the drill and examination last spring, I gave notice that I should advertise my school visitations in the Dansville Herald, (the editor of that sheet having kindly offered us a column for educational purposes,) and give through it the name of every teacher, and a sketch of the appearance of his school, and the means of his success, or the cause of his failure! Much interest was felt by teachers in regard to the report to be published in regard to them and their schools. Never have I found the school-rooms and schools in so

good order as since I commenced giving these reports in the public prints. Yards were cleared of rubbish, floors scrubbed; classes were required to stand and move in perfect order, and extra efforts were evidently made to cause them to understand thoroughly what they had been over. As the names and number of visitors were reported, great effort was made to secure the attendance of patrons; in one or two cases I have met almost the entire district, both parents and children. Nearly every teacher in the assembly district takes the paper (it is afforded to teachers for \$0.75 a year) for the purpose of examining the column devoted to common schools.

I have visited about one-half of the schools under my jurisdiction the present term.

HARVEY FARLEY,  
*School Commissioner.*

SPRINGWATER, *January 1, 1863.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

MUNNSVILLE, MADISON CO., N. Y., *November 20, 1862.*

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

Dear Sir—In answer to the inquiries suggested in the "Circular to School Commissioners," I have to say:

The most serious evil in our common schools is the want of regularity and punctuality in attendance. On this account the earnest efforts of the faithful teacher, and of the friends of education, and the lavish expenditure of money, fail of accomplishing their greatest amount of good; for this reason the delinquent requires the extra attention of the teacher, which otherwise had been unnecessary, and thus the *whole school* is robbed of what justly belongs to it, while the delinquent cannot, by any effort of his own or of others to assist him, ever regain what he has lost. This evil becomes more aggravating, when the fact is known that many parents often allow their children to be absent from school for the most trifling and frivolous reasons. I judge that five-sixths of all the children attending the common schools are included between the ages of seven and fourteen years. Too many under the ages of four, five, six, and seven years attend, whose proper mental and physical training could be better attended to at home, and greatly for the interests of the schools.

Though the provisions for instruction in many of our districts are excellent, and the school houses, grounds, furniture, and means of warming and ventilating are much that could be desired, yet in the majority of them I find cheap teachers, cheap school houses in or hard upon the highway, little or no furniture or apparatus, no ventilation except through the door, floor, or battered walls; and, in short, many of them are *very cheap schools*. A very commendable interest in the schools, however, is beginning to be manifested, and the future may hope for much improvement. Their most urgent wants are to raise the standard of qualifica-



tion of teachers to its required point (which would cut off about half of our present corps); to make our trustees and parents understand and appreciate the fact that in the common school is their true interest; that the *best* teacher is the cheapest; and that their study should be to know "not how little money can we expend for our school, but how much can we expend and expend it profitably?" These facts once understood and put into practice, and a high standard of qualification of teachers adopted, would, as it seems to me, secure to our schools ample provisions for instruction, regular and punctual attendance, hearty and vigorous co-operation with the teacher, ample and convenient grounds, buildings, furniture, and apparatus—in short, would cure the most of the evils of which we have to complain.

The rate-bill is unpopular. It offers a premium for non-attendance. In many instances, it has had the effect to diminish the number in attendance, and in not a few cases to break up the school as soon as the public money was exhausted.

The proportion of female to male teachers employed during the past year is more than two to one. Probably not more than one-tenth of those engaged in teaching intend to follow the business as a permanent employment. Many take it up for a short time merely as an auxiliary or stepping-stone to something else; some, because it affords fair pay for a few otherwise idle months; and others, failing in other occupations, because in this incapacity is not so generally detected and brought to a just account. Of this class some are employed for a single term, and others for from one to three or four years. Wages of male teachers vary from fourteen to thirty dollars per month, and of females from one dollar to five dollars per week.

There are about 400 persons in the county who teach more or less. Of this number about 80 attended the institute at Hamilton one year ago, and about 180 this fall. This shows a fair increase, and the interest is also proportionately increasing.

For my examinations of teachers, I have prepared a printed list of questions upon the branches usually taught in our schools, viz., grammar—including misspelled words for correction—arithmetic, and geography. I furnish each teacher with a copy of these questions, together with a sheet of foolscap paper, pen and ink, and require him to write out the answers in full, and number them to correspond with the number of the question. I also notify him that I shall judge of his writing, spelling, and punctuation by his written answers. I examine farther by an exercise in reading, and by asking more or less oral questions. And where the person is an applicant for an advanced school, I examine him in the higher branches.

I find the majority of the teachers deficient in a knowledge of the principles of reading, writing, and spelling, and of the *reasons why* of almost everything which they are expected to teach. A very small pro-

portion have read any work treating of the "Theory and Practice of Teaching."

I have given a greater number of certificates of the third grade than of any other. I find but very few persons possessing the qualifications required by "No. 64," Code of Public Instruction, entitling them to a certificate of the first grade. The demand for such teachers is much greater than the supply.

There have been two graduates and one undergraduate of the State Normal school employed at different times during the past two years. Their success has been generally extraordinary, and there is great need of many such teachers.

In calling on the principals of the seminaries of this district for the purpose of getting the information required, and on making my business known, I received but a cool reception. They had just completed their reports to the Regents, which required a great expenditure of time, labor, and patience, and which contained all their statistics and information which I desired. They very kindly, however, gave me, in brief, such facts as they could command, and referred me to the Annual Report of the Regents of the University for particulars, to which I would most respectfully refer your honor.

The number of private schools in the district is 12, with an attendance of 249 scholars. This shows an increase over last year's report of 5 schools and 110 scholars.

There are no parochial schools, nor schools for colored children in the district.

The condition of the libraries is generally bad. There are many good books in each of them, together with many useless ones. In this age of books and newspapers, these libraries are little patronized. Many families have their private libraries, while nearly all have their periodicals and newspapers. It is the general opinion that the money annually expended for books could be much more profitably expended for globes, outline maps, and other school apparatus. It is a surprising fact, that not more than about one-tenth of our districts are supplied with globes.

The general sentiment is that one trustee in a district is better than three, for the reason that if one does the business he knows when it is done, and there is not then each one of three depending upon the other two to do it, nor is there any effort to shirk responsibility upon another. About one-half of the districts have elected to have but one.

But very few of the trustees have complied strictly with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction. The most, however, have at least one blank book in which a record of attendance and accounts are kept.

The teachers' institute for the county was held at Morrisville in September and October last, and had a session of twelve days. J. H. French, of Syracuse, N. Y., and H. J. Sherrill, of Hamilton, N. Y., were

employed as instructors. Instruction was given in reading, writing, spelling, geography, arithmetic, grammar, object teaching, map drawing, and school government. The evenings were mostly occupied in discussions. Rev. — York delivered a lecture on Education of Labor; J. W. Hatch, on Astronomy; Hon. Thomas Barlow, on Entomology; Hon. Emerson W. Keyes, on Education in Life—Life in Education. The number of teachers in attendance was 172. The public interest manifested in the exercises was much greater than usual, and we have much to hope from the good results of these annual gatherings. A catalogue, containing not only a list of names of persons in attendance, but also an account of proceedings had, will soon be issued—a copy of which will be forwarded to the Department.

In-addition to the usual visitations of schools, examinations of teachers, attendance at the institute, apportionment of public money, making report, &c., I have been laboring to establish teachers' associations in the district, and in the several towns. The experiment has proved, to some extent, satisfactory; and there is an increasing ambition, on the part of teachers, to qualify themselves better for the discharge of their responsible duties.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

H. L. ROCKWELL.

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## MONROE COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

### *Report to the Department of Public Instruction:*

The attendance of persons of school age, in this assembly district, is a little more than sixty-three and two-tenths per cent. The rate-bills do not diminish the attendance, in my opinion, and I find very few disposed to abolish them.

In many cases, the provision for the instruction of pupils is not what it should be. As poor a teacher as I have holds a State certificate from Christopher Morgan. Young and inexperienced teachers are often employed.

The character and condition of the school houses is generally good. As to the kind and supply of text books, of the former there are varieties, *ad infinitum*; of the latter it must be confessed that the supply does not quite equal the demand. The common English elementary branches are usually taught. The pupils are mostly between five and sixteen years of age. I find the school houses poorly furnished, with black-boards in many instances painted upon an imperfect wall, &c. There are two females to one male teacher, and the per cent. of the former is steadily increasing. About twenty per cent. follow teaching as a business. Average wages of teachers, \$5 per week. About half attend the insti-



tute, and not a tenth the associations. In examining teachers, I usually confine myself to those branches that they will be likely to teach in their schools. I find them very deficient in mathematical geography, use of globes and school apparatus generally. Very few understand phonetics as they ought. One in ten has studied some work on the theory and practice of teaching. Most of my certificates are of the second grade. This fall there is more demand for teachers of high qualifications than ever before. I have no Normal school graduates.

There are three academies in my district; average attendance, about 100 each. Buildings good; libraries and apparatus tolerable, though I suspect not always what the law requires. The studies pursued are algebra, Davies' Bourdon, higher arithmetic, grammar, geology, chemistry, philosophy, and *sometimes* spelling. The wages paid their teachers is but little more than that paid to the first class district school teachers. Their sources of support are private donations in the way of furnishing buildings, and tuition. The rates of tuition are \$6.50 per term of half a year, and \$5 per term of one-third of a year. The teachers' classes in the academies are, no doubt, a great practical benefit to the district schools.

There are only two private schools less than there were one year ago. The number of pupils in attendance is less than then. Parochial schools there are none. Schools for colored children, none; they attend with those not so highly colored. Union free school districts, not one.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—Condition generally good; character of books good; and they are commonly properly estimated by the district. There are few families that do not take and read a newspaper these times; the effect of this is to increase their estimate of the district library.

TRUSTEES.—Most districts prefer but one trustee. The proportion of trustees who have conformed to No. 116 of the Code is about one to ninety-nine, especially as to the book containing district moneys.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—In session ten days. Instructors—N. A. Calkins, New York city; J. M. Watson, New York city; E. B. Knapp, New York city; W. S. Hutchings, New York city; A. J. Home, Rochester; A. B. Campbell, Penfield; L. N. Allen, Honeoye Falls. Number of teachers in attendance ten days, about 100.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—The detail of my labors would make a small book at least, and, that I may not seem egotistical, permit me to say that I try to make myself generally useful.

Yours respectfully,

WM. W. MARSH,

*School Commissioner.*

PITTSFORD, November 12, 1862.

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY.

Hon. V. M. Rice:

In compliance with the circular issued by the State Department in August last, the following is respectfully submitted:

The schools of my district, notwithstanding the imperiled condition of our country, have been better supported, and the attendance of pupils larger than the previous year. In 98 of the rural districts of the county, the whole number of pupils enrolled within school age, and during the summer terms, is 3,445; their aggregate attendance, 2,342, exhibiting an attendance per day of 68 per cent. Of this number 1,179 studied written and mental arithmetic; 52 algebra; 586 English grammar; 32 Town's analysis; 1,037 descriptive geography; 7 astronomy; 49 natural philosophy; 22 physical geography; 49 history; 4 botany. The age at which pupils enter school is five years, and leave at seventeen. The text books used are generally of the most popular kind; but in some instances schools are inadequately supplied. In order to give a more correct account of the general condition of the schools of the district, the village schools, enjoying more extensive and systematic advantages, are excluded, and the statements confined to the 98 districts above named. The condition of the schools in regard to apparatus, furniture, means of ventilation, sites, including play-grounds, and such features in the general arrangements in and about the entire school locations as would tend to make them attractive to pupils, affords little or no encouragement in the prospect of an early moral and intellectual regeneration; yet cheering instances are occasionally presented of excellent attainments, made by some of their occupants. The destitution in these respects, with a few exceptions, is so extensive that until a reformation is wrought there will be little to encourage the most sanguine.

The proportion of male and female, during the summer term, is as one to three, and vice versa during the winter; and the proportion of teachers, who have permanently entered the profession, and those temporarily, is as one to two. The aggregate time that teachers have been engaged is three years. The average wages paid females per week, including board, is \$2.25; males, \$6. The average standard, or merit of teachers in their examinations, is respectable, entitling them to at least the rank of second grade; but when tested by the most approved and enlightened system of government and intellectual discipline, there is a serious deficiency in the practical application of their knowledge, and in the general conduct of their schools, more forcibly urging the necessity of giving increased attention to the State system of Normal training. That a course of discipline in the most approved and practical modes of governing schools, and instructing them, should be made to constitute an indispensable qualification to the rights of the profession, cannot remain doubtful to any who are at all conversant with the past and

present workings of our schools, and their apparent results; especially when contrasted with those that have enjoyed the advantages of professional teaching. Efforts are making to remove these deficiencies, which are to some extent successful, by the organization and holding of teachers' institutes in the several commissioner districts of the State; while the legal provisions establishing them are so inefficient in respect to the enforcement of the attendance of teachers, and of a strict and active participation in their instruction, that the beneficent objects designed to be attained by them are not reached, and the liberal expenditure of the State for their support is measurably lost. A law making it necessary for candidates (before they can be admitted to the privilege or right of an examination) to exhibit to the commissioner a certificate that they have faithfully, and with credit, attended the instructions given, at either a teachers' institute or a Normal school, founded for that purpose, at least within one year immediately preceding such application for examination, and that their proficiency in the instructions therein given gives fair promise of their ability to teach, would, in my opinion, to some extent improve the general character of teachers, and make good the expenditure of the State.

The branches of study teachers are found best prepared to teach are arithmetic, algebra and geography; and those in which they are most deficient are orthography, grammar, reading, history and natural philosophy. The proportion of those who have studied any treatise on theory and practice of teaching, is as one to five.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—The number is nine, exceeding that of last year by two; number of pupils attending them, 270.

The number of union free school districts organized under the law of 1853 is 7, and their location as follows: Districts Nos. 8 and 11 are located in the village of Amsterdam. District No. 4, in the village of Fultonville. District No. 8, in the village of Glen. These two last are both in the town of Glen. There are two in the town of Palatine; one at Palatine Bridge, No. 2, and district No. 9, located one mile below Spraker's, and St. Johnsville, district No. 3, recently organized.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—Their condition is bad. The character of books contained in them is generally good; but the people generally are indifferent in regard to them.

PRIVATE LIBRARIES.—The families owning them will not exceed one in one hundred. Newspapers and periodicals, one or both, are generally found in every family.

TRUSTEES.—The preference of the people, as expressed at their annual meeting, is for three; the proportion in favor of three instead of one, is as 20 to 1.

The teachers' institute was in session twelve days, closing Oct. 25th.

Names and residences of instructors: B. F. Clark, Fort Plain; A. Smith Knight, Fonda; A. B. Miller, Fultonville; T. S. Ireland, Canajo-



harie; A. Geweye, Spraker's Basin; A. W. Cox, Amsterdam; James H. Hoose, Warnerville; E. H. Potter, Albany.

Subjects on which instruction was given: Orthography, reading and elocution, English grammar, punctuation and capital letters, geography, written and mental arithmetic, algebra, natural philosophy, map-drawing, writing, school government, and the best modes of imparting instruction.

Number of teachers in attendance, 154.

Names of lecturers: J. A. Bloomingdale, subject, "The Actions of Men in Promoting and Retarding the Advancement of Civilization;" W. S. Aumock, subject, "Mental Culture and its Triumphs;" Jacob Wilson, subject, "New Principles in the Conduct of Life;" B. F. Clark, subject, "Preparation of the Teacher for Each Recitation;" Walter Cross, subject, "The True Teacher;" A. W. Cox, subject, "Truth in its Relation to the Mind;" V. M. Rice, subjects, "The Value of Elocutionary Reading;" "The Way to Successfully Teach it;" "School Government;" "How it should be Administered by the Teacher, to Discipline the Faculties, and Form the Character, and Establish aright the Mental Habits of the Pupil;" "Geography, its Importance and the right way to teach it;" A. H. Ayers, subject, "The Life and Times of Marcus Julius Cicero;" Mr. Beattie, subject, "The Origin of Language, its use."

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—Detail of labors performed in the discharge of duty:

*First*, Counseling trustees.

*Second*, Reconciling differences or objections of inhabitants against teachers.

*Third*, Visiting schools.

*Fourth*, Examination of teachers.

*Fifth*, Apportioning public money.

*Sixth* Organizing teachers' institutes, of which there are two sessions a year.

*Seventh*, Making and filing abstract.

*Eighth*, Correspondence.

Respectfully yours,

MORRIS KLOCK,

*School Commissioner.*

ST. JOHNSVILLE, December 23, 1862.

## NIAGARA COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

ATTENDANCE.—Of a total number of children of 9,233 between the ages of four and twenty-one, I find 1,263 attend less than two months, 1,741 over two and less than four months, 1,403 over four and less than six months, 1,003 over six and less than eight months, and 279 over eight and less than ten months. I do not think rate-bills diminish the attendance. I think public sentiment in favor of rate-bills.

The provision for the instruction of pupils is very good. There are but four log school houses, and they are very comfortable; the other houses in the district have been built within a few years, and are very good, most of them with out-houses. They are warmed with stoves, except the union school house in Lockport, which is warmed with a furnace.

School apparatus not much in use; some of the districts have Holbrook's.

TEXT BOOKS.—Sanders' series of Readers, Davies' Mathematics, and McNalley's Geographies. Parker and Watson's Readers, and Robinson's Mathematics are used to some extent. Pupils generally commence attending school at about five or six years of age, and end their attendance at from sixteen to twenty. The general progress of the schools is good; their most urgent want is good teachers.

TEACHERS.—The total number who have taught in this district the past year is 134; males 47, females 87. I think about 50 follow teaching as a permanent employment. The wages of male teachers average \$22 per month; females about \$3.50 per week. The attendance of teachers at the teachers' institute is fair, although not as good as I would wish. They are examined in reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, geography, &c. I grant no certificates unless I am persuaded that the applicant can teach all the above. I do not know of any graduates of the State Normal school teaching in this district, although I think Mr. and Miss Atwater, of the Lockport union school, are.

There are no academies within this district, unless you regard the Lockport union school as coming under that head.

Private schools, 12; attendance, 677, which is a decrease of former years. The largest are among the Germans, in the towns of Wheatfield and Royalton. They do not allow their children to attend the district school until they are over 14 years of age.

Schools for colored children, 1; attendance about 40. Supported free by union district, Lockport.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—Condition bad, but very little used. Books: history and miscellaneous. They are held in poor estimation generally.

TRUSTEES.—Three are generally preferred; the larger portion of the districts have three, about as three to one. Trustees have generally complied with No. 116 of the Code.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—Number of days in session, 11; instructors—Prof. Sweet, Dugway, Oswego county N. Y.; Prof. Watson, New York city; E. W. Abbey, Lockport, N. Y. Instruction was given in all the common branches. Hon. V. M. Rice, Prof. Sweet, and Prof. Watson lectured before the institute. Number in attendance about 150.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—Detail of labors: visiting schools five days in the week; one day in each week for examination of teachers.

HIRAM POMROY,

*School Commissioner.*

## ONEIDA COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

Only a little more than one-half of the children of school age are in attendance upon the schools, and the attendance is doubtless much diminished by the rate-bill. The general sentiment is opposed to rate-bills. Little attention is given to proper selection of sites, or ornamentation of school grounds. The seats and desks in the school rooms are inconvenient, apparatus very limited, and no uniformity of text books. The average length of time pupils attend school is about five months in the year. Some progress in the schools is apparent. We need a higher grade of teachers, a more thorough classification of the schools, and uniform text books.

About two-thirds of the teachers are females. More than one-half of those engaged follow teaching as a steady employment, and devote from three to four years to this work. Female teachers receive from \$1.75 to \$3 per week, and board; and male teachers from \$15 to \$25 per month. About three-fourths attend the teachers' institute. Candidates for certificates are subjected to examinations, sufficiently exacting to test their qualifications, in the branches of study usually taught in common schools. They are found generally best prepared in arithmetic, and most deficient in reading. Most of the certificates granted are of the second grade; very few of the first. One Normal graduate and three under-graduates are teaching in this jurisdiction; these have been very successful, and their influence is most salutary. They are not in great demand, on account of the higher salaries claimed for services.

There is in this district one academic institution, Whitestown seminary, registering 269 students. The average age of the males is 19 years; of the females, 18. The building is commodious. The library contains 2,000 volumes. The apparatus is valued at \$1,500. The advantages of teachers' classes in the academy are considerable.

The school libraries are in a dilapidated condition, and not appreciated by the people. Nearly every family has a private library, and is supplied with magazines or newspapers.

Nearly one-half of the districts have only one trustee, but the popular sentiment favors three. Not more than two-thirds of the districts have complied with 116 of the Code.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—Detail of labors performed in discharge of duties: very soon after making the apportionment, I advertise to meet the teachers for examination. I meet them one day in each of the several towns in my district. About one-half of the teachers attend the public examinations; the young and less experienced prefer a private examination. After completing the examinations, I commence visiting schools. I do not visit, on an average, more than seven schools in a week, in consequence of attending to the many calls I have in different quarters of my district. After completing my visitations, &c., we advertise and prepare for the institute. After the institute, we gather in the school



reports, which is attended with much trouble and delay, in consequence of the town clerks not doing what the law requires them to do. After making abstract of reports, we again advertise to meet the teachers for examination. After the examinations, we again commence our visitations, devoting our whole time in the discharge of duties pertaining to the office.

HARVEY E. WILCOX,

*School Commissioner.*

FLOYD, *January 2, 1863.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

BABCOCK HILL, *December 26, 1862.*

In compliance with the requirements of the Department to make a written report on public instruction within my official jurisdiction, I herewith submit the following :

There are 7,868 children reported by trustees between the ages of four and twenty-one years, and an attendance at school of only 5,043. The first number is too large, as such children as are at work or attending school out of the school districts in which their parents reside are often included in two reports, while many between the ages above specified are attending higher schools, and consequently would not be included in the reported attendance at district schools. Special inquiries in every school district have convinced me there is not a child of school age within my jurisdiction but that attends school. Teachers are instructed to seek to bring the poor children into their schools, protect them, and secure their regular attendance. All children do not attend with a regularity that is desirable, yet all attend school more or less.

The rate-bill system no doubt prevents attendance, as some keep their children at home for a trifling pretence to save something on tuition; yet it would be impolitic to change the rate-bill system for district taxation. These school *taxes* are very prolific sources of difficulty; and to collect the money now paid on rate-bills by a tax upon the district would array some in almost every district that are wealthy, and the power that that wealth gives, against the best interests of our schools. The money that is now collected to make up our school fund is collected with other taxes, and is not known or thought of how much of it goes to our schools, hence it is paid without the tax-payer having his attention directed to the school as the source of burden; yet if that money was collected in a separate tax, it would ruin our school system at once. There are some in almost every school district whose children have grown up, and they urge, with much plausibility of justice, that they have paid the tuition of their own children, and are still willing to pay by tax the tuition of the indigent in their district, but would not be willing to pay for those who were, perhaps, equally able to pay their own. Fuel and repairs seem more general, but to tax for individual tuition would array a

property influence against our schools that would be anything but beneficial. As the richest are usually most penurious and have less children, their influence would be used to employ the cheapest teachers—those clogs to progress. We hear but little complaint in collecting rate-bills, but are often counseled how to proceed in the collection of a tax. If the State would assume its *true position*, furnish school books, employ the teachers, make the schools *free*, and then compel attendance, it would remove most of the evils we now have to contend with.

**SCHOOL HOUSES.**—Out of the 102 school houses in the second district, some 15 are rather tastefully built, pleasantly located, and are creditable to their districts; some 40 are comfortable buildings; some 30 should be rebuilt, and some 15 that are wholly unfit for the purposes for which they are used. Their locations are not bad, but there is a lack of playgrounds in most cases, a lack of proper grading, shade trees, and such little things that would add much to their beauty and cost but little. There are out-buildings generally. The furniture almost universally consists of from one to three chairs, a water-pail, cup, and broom. School houses are warmed by stoves, with wood for fuel—in most cases supplied by a tax upon the district. Some districts, however, furnish wood by the scholars, and school houses are ventilated by dropping a window from the top, or raising from the bottom—perhaps the two methods about equal.

Most school houses are supplied with maps—usually Mitchell's outline maps, some with maps of New York State, United States, Normal charts, astronomical charts, and some thirty districts with globes.

**TEXT BOOKS.**—Sanders' series Readers; recently Parker and Watson's Readers have been introduced into many schools; Robinson's mathematical works are generally used, yet Thompson's and Perkins' are used in almost every school; Monteith and McNally's Geography; Brown's Grammar; Sanders' Speller.

**STUDIES PURSUED.**—Spelling, reading, writing, geography, mental and written arithmetic, grammar, composition, declamation; some 30 schools, algebra, philosophy, physiology, &c.

**TIME OF ATTENDANCE.**—Pupils commence at from 4 to 5 years of age, and end from 15 to 18, their attendance at our common schools. Children are as far advanced now at the ages of 8 to 10, as they were a few years since at the ages of 10 to 12.

The most urgent want of the schools is *qualified, zealous, working teachers*.

I have granted licenses to 406 teachers—148 males, 256 females. Out of my last one hundred visitations, I have estimated that the average number of terms of service is six. One has taught 36 terms, and 19 have taught 10 terms and upward.

Males usually teach in winter, and have other employments in summer; females teach whenever they find a situation. Last winter teachers

received the following wages: Males per month, without board, average \$22 (\$20-\$33); females per week, without board, \$3.50. Females receive two to four shillings per week less in summer than in winter.

Not more than one-half of the teachers have ever attended teachers' institutes or associations.

EXAMINATIONS.—I first submit a list of written or printed questions, and require written answers in full—the applicants to sign their names, giving their post office address, age, number of terms they have taught, and the school they have engaged, if any—then with an oral examination, on the elementary sound of letters, reading, &c., with questions in relation to government, methods of teaching, and matters of general intelligence, judge of their fitness to teach. I usually find the greatest deficiency in a knowledge of elementary sounds of letters, history and reading. Most applicants have spent a term or two in a teachers' class in some academy, and are somewhat acquainted with some work treating of the theory and practice of teaching.

I have granted 40 first grade certificates; many of them, however, have been to teachers residing in the 1st, 3d and 4th districts in Oneida county, and to teachers in Commissioner Beal's district, Herkimer county, by a mutual exchange of 1st grade certificates among our most meritorious teachers; 200 second grades and 165 third grades; rejected some 30 applicants.

The *demand* is not very brisk for teachers of "high qualifications;" yet that grade of teachers, if they can be had at low wages, can readily find employment. But one Normal graduate has taught in the second district; she was a first class teacher; resides in Madison county.

The trustees in their reports have included every school within the second district, except Hamilton College, under the heading of "Private Schools." Whether any of them have been incorporated as academies, I am not able to say. 20 private schools are reported, with 718 students, which is no doubt nearly correct. The Liberal institute, Prof Gallup's and Dwight's schools at Clinton, each have a library, chemical and philosophical apparatus. The students are mostly from 14 to 20 years of age. Their studies include philosophy, chemistry, algebra and higher mathematics, languages, &c., &c.

Of the twenty private schools reported, in every case the teachers own or rent the buildings, and receive tuition for their services. The tuition for fourteen weeks (a usual term) would vary from \$4 to \$7—according to the studies pursued.

There is no academy within the second district having a teachers' class, yet bordering on the east is West Winfield academy; on the north, Whitesboro'; on the west, Oneida—all with teachers' classes, all valuable institutions, and rendering valuable services to our common schools, sending out a large number of teachers annually; and their principals, Hovey, Gardner, and Rollo, ever ready to attend institutes and associa-



tions, and labor for the elevation of the teachers' profession. There has been no increase of private schools within the last two years, yet more are reported, because a better acquaintance in the district has enabled me to correct many errors that existed in the reports of trustees the previous year.

There are no parochial schools, or schools for colored children, or union free schools.

**LIBRARIES.**—The school district libraries have outlived their usefulness. What are not scattered beyond recovery are laid up in closets and garrets, undrawn, unused, little or no value attached to them. If a librarian happens to be chosen at the annual meeting, it is seldom that he pays any attention to the library; and trustees seem to forget that it is any part of their duty to look after it, and are only reminded of its existence by the *headings* in their annual reports. They *guess* at the number of volumes to fill up the blank, and the subject is dismissed from their attention.

Private libraries, periodicals, and newspapers occupy a space in almost every house, except the dwellings of those of foreign birth—the reading of which seems to consume all time allotted to reading; the current news of the day is the absorbing subject of interest—district libraries are forgotten.

Details of my labors for the last year would make at least a volume of 500 pages, revised and abridged at that. Over three thousand miles have been traveled in the discharge of my duties; roads have been broken through snow over hills where not a footprint remained to mark the way; and a division of labor with a faithful horse was a necessity, with all the pure air that health demanded; mud has been worked for days one foot below the surface; drenching rains have been passed through, and nights darker than ever enshrouded Egypt. Five days each week for over four months last winter, with very few lost days, were spent visiting schools; usually spent one-half day in each school, inviting trustees and patrons to call with me, which request was generally complied with; spent about the same time last summer. The usual course at these visitations has been to ask teachers to go on in their customary routine; have them call a class, occupy a little time to see their method or system, then take the class myself, and either in drills or examinations occupy the remaining portion of the time. In this way I could detect any errors on the part of the teachers, and could give a practical illustration of the manner in which I think instruction should be given. I have endeavored to visit young and inexperienced teachers early in their terms, and have called on such often where my services seemed necessary; have met a few that did not possess a single element of a true teacher. I advised such to leave and abandon the business, but prefer to give credit and encourage, when it can be done with propriety.

Alteration of school districts is a vexatious subject; applications often

originate from some neighborhood difficulty, and are pressed with much earnestness. I have usually made it a condition that the consent of trustees should be obtained, which is seldom done, consequently they are left as constant harrassing subjects.

Questions are daily presented, either verbal or in writing, concerning some of the thousand contingencies that arise in the working of our school system, some of which require *time* for investigation. On my return home at the close of the week, I find a correspondence usually that occupies my time, including the time others sleep, until Monday, when the same scene is to be again enacted.

Last April I called the teachers of the second district together at Clinton, and held an institute for three days; 125 teachers were present. As it was held during the vacations of Hamilton college and the high schools in Clinton, most of the principals and professors met with us. It was a pleasant and profitable meeting. All seemed delighted, and desired to be called together again. Examinations occupy much time spring and fall. Four weeks have been spent this fall at institutes, our annual institute at Rome, and the Union institute at West Winfield. We now have town associations that meet once in two weeks. Patrons of schools meet with us, and to educate them is of the first importance. Much is anticipated from these associations.

There is constant and unremitting labor attached to the office of school commissioner, much that is vexatious, because we have to "patiently endure *evils* we would gladly cure." Yet there are pleasures that compensate—a conviction that the world is improving; that the next generation will have the *honesty* and *ability* to put down this rebellion, for they will be wiser and better than this; that there are a faithful corps of teachers at work laboring to inspire a love for truth, order and patriotism, as for the arts and sciences. The next generation will be a peace loving, law abiding, God serving people—for *this we are working*.

Very respectfully,

P. B. CRANDALL,

*School Commissioner.*

### THIRD DISTRICT.

To Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Pub. Instruction* :

The third commissioner's district of Oneida county comprises five towns, and returns 9,270 persons of school age, of whom 6,083 have attended school during some portion of the past year, their average time of attendance being nearly four months.

The system of raising money for payment of teachers' wages by rate-bill seems to meet the approval of the people very generally, especially that portion of them on whom the burden would most heavily fall if direct taxation was substituted; and this being an agricultural district,

rate-bills are collected with great promptness, and the collection is attended with very little difficulty.

There are within this commissioner district 97 school districts, occupying 98 school houses, or separate buildings occupied for school purposes, all of which are in good condition. A large proportion of them are furnished with globes, maps and charts; and all, with two exceptions, provided with a copy of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary. The text books in use comprise nearly all the varieties found on publishers' catalogues, no particular series taking the lead, or seeming to have the preference. This great diversity renders classification in some schools utterly impossible, increasing the labors of teachers, and retarding the progress of the pupils. I trust some measures may be taken to secure a greater uniformity. Anything tending to that end would be alike acceptable to teachers and commissioners.

The age at which pupils begin and end their attendance varies in different localities. During the summer term many are sent to school as young as they can prudently be transferred from maternal care to that of the female teacher. Very few are found in attendance who are more than 17 or 18 years of age. I have no data from which to strike an average.

Of the 205 individuals who have taught in this district during some portion of the past year, 63 were males, and 142 were females; and of the whole number, perhaps not more than one-fourth could be classed as professional teachers. They were licensed and classed as follows, viz: Normal school, 1; by State Superintendent, 5; by commissioners, 9 of the first grade, 183 of the second grade, and 7 of the third grade. Something more than one-third of the whole number attended the last teachers' institute, and are now putting in practice the different modes of teaching as presented by the able lecturers and instructors who lectured on and discussed the various modes before that association.

Private or select schools have been on the decrease during the last two years, not only in number of schools, but in patrons and numbers in attendance.

The sentiment of the people is strongly in favor of the one trustee system, but owing to the length of time necessary to effect the change, but few districts have adopted the resolutions necessary to that object.

There is within this district but one academy, known as Rome academy, situated in Rome, under the charge of that able and accomplished educator, Mr. O. M. Root. The building used for school purposes is a large brick edifice, three stories in height, containing three large study rooms capable of accommodating 160 pupils, three recitation rooms, and several rooms used for assistants, coal, store-rooms, &c. The library numbers 492 volumes valued at \$500, and is opened for drawing on Tuesdays and Fridays. The chemical and philosophical apparatus is in good condition, comprising electrical, galvanic and pneumatic in philosophy, and a good



supply of the common chemical apparatus, with a sufficiency of chemicals. The students in attendance number 156, and are of all ages from 12 to 24 years. The studies generally pursued are practical and higher arithmetic, mental arithmetic, geography, with outline maps, English grammar and analysis, elementary and university algebra, geometry, astronomy, natural philosophy, English literature, Latin lessons, Greek lessons, &c. Rates of tuition are from \$5 for beginners in English branches, to \$7.50 for more advanced pupils; French, German and Italian being each \$3 extra. The principal receives, as his salary, the net proceeds of the school. The assistants receive: one \$330 per year; the other, the male, \$6.50 per week; and the female, \$4 per week; a writing master is also employed at \$25 per term. The teachers' class, the current year, is full, with thirteen applications which cannot be received. The class is instructed by the principal, Prof. Root, in the elementary branches; the theory and practice of teaching is read and discussed, and lectures are given by the principal on the practical matters of teaching, which are of great value to the class. Some of our best and most efficient teachers attribute their success to the hints and instructions given in these familiar lectures before the teachers' class.

This commissioner's district, comprising, as it does, a section of country some 33 miles in extent, numbering 114 schools, with a pupil population of 9,270, and a general population, as per last census returns, of 26,264, affords an ample field for labor. I have made, during the past year, 185 visits which have been accredited by trustees, and many that have not been brought to their knowledge. I have not made as frequent visits, nor spent as much time with each school as I could have wished, but all that time would permit. I have the satisfaction of reporting the schools all in a healthy and flourishing condition, and from the apparent interest now taken in common schools by trustees and patrons, I trust the day is not far distant when their benefits will be duly appreciated.

The above is most respectfully submitted.

J. H. TRACY,  
*School Commissioner.*

#### FOURTH DISTRICT.

The whole number of children of school age, residing within this district, is 8,203; of whom 6,079 attended district schools during the past school year. Rate-bills have affected the attendance of some 120 pupils within this district, the parents of said pupils being poor and not willing to pay. The sentiment of the public in regard to them is, however, very favorable.

The character and condition of the school houses and their sites are much better than formerly. The houses have been repaired from year to year, and as a whole they are very good. The out-buildings are rather

poor. They are warmed by the common box-stove, and ventilated by the raising and lowering of windows. Their apparatus consists of black-boards, Mitchell's outline maps, astronomical charts, and about one-half the entire number have globes.

The age at which pupils commence to attend school is from 5 to 7, and end from 18 to 21; and they are generally allowed to attend during this time. The general progress of the schools is good; their most urgent wants are more interest on the part of the patrons.

About one-third of the teachers employed at present are males, the other two-thirds are females. About one-half the females follow teaching summer and winter; the others are mostly beginners, and will probably do likewise. Some 12 of the males who are now engaged as teachers make this their permanent occupation; the remaining 72 follow teaching as a business during the winter. They generally devote from three to five years as to teaching. The males have from 18 to 25 dollars per month; the females have from 2 to 5 dollars per week. They nearly all attend the teachers' institute from this district. I generally examine them in all the text books used in our common school. They are best qualified to teach mathematics, grammar and spelling; they are most deficient in the rules for reading, geography and philosophy. About one-third of the entire number have studied the "Normal Method" of teaching the common branches. The demand for teachers of high qualifications is rather limited and well supplied. There are no Normal school graduates nor undergraduates teaching within this district. Two years ago there were four teaching within this district. They had good success, and manifested great zeal, and wielded such an influence as only model teachers could hope to; and the demand for their services was great.

There is but one academy within this district. It has about 100 students; their ages vary from 12 to 22 years of age. The building is divided into apartments suitable for recitation rooms and rooms for study. They have a very interesting and well adapted library. They are supplied with all the chemical and philosophical apparatus necessary to explain those studies. The studies pursued in this academy include all those branches taught in our common schools, also trigonometry and surveying, Latin and Greek, French and German, music and astronomy. The wages paid the principal, is \$800.00. I am not prepared to say what wages his assistants have. The teachers' class is of great benefit to our common schools, and the demand for these students as teachers is great.

There are but four private schools within this district; and but 110 pupils in attendance on them. Their number has greatly decreased within a few years. There are no parochial schools. There are no schools for colored children. There are no union free schools, as organized under the law of 1853.

The condition of our district libraries is rather poor; they are held of

but very little use in the estimation of the people, and consequently very little attention is paid to them. Many families have private libraries, and almost every family is supplied with a newspaper, consequently the reading of the district libraries is very limited.

The one trustee system is fast gaining the supremacy, and will ere long, I trust, be adopted throughout the entire district. About two-thirds of the district have but one trustee; and about one-half of the remainder have elected none, awaiting to adopt the one trustee system. I think all the trustees have complied with No. 116, Code of Public Instruction.

The number of days devoted to holding teachers' institute, was 12. The principal instructor was C. T. Pooler, of Deansville. Instruction was given in all the branches pertaining to our common schools. The lecturers and their subjects are as follows: C. T. Pooler, subject, "Benefits of Teaching;" Oren Root, Jun., —; E. H. Roberts, "Hobbies;" W. Root, "Adam's Benefits of Education;" L. A. Phillips, "Reading;" S. W. Clarke, "Grammar;" Prof. Gardner, "Geology;" Rev. Mr. Knowy, "Morals;" Prof. Lusk, "Writing;" Prof. Fish, "Atoms;" Hon. V. M. Rice, "Benefits of Teachers' Institutes." The whole number in attendance was about 300. The public interest manifested in the exercises was very great; and many desire that the county should appropriate a sufficient sum to enable the commissioners to continue it for a term of at least six weeks.

The detail of labor performed by me during the past year, is as follows:

1st. Meeting the teachers in each town in April last for examination.

2d. Publishing such official transactions as would be beneficial to the teachers.

3d. Visiting schools. As my former report shows, nearly every school within this district has been visited twice; and while making such visitations made inquiries into the condition of the district libraries, and all other matters pertaining to the welfare of the district.

4th. Attended teachers' institute during entire term.

5th. Met teachers for examination in November last.

6th. Attended teachers' association in each town for the benefit of teachers.

7th. Made official report to State Superintendent.

8th. Apportioned the money to several districts.

And, in general, I have sought faithfully to discharge the duties pertaining to my office.

Respectfully submitted.

MERRITT N. CAPRON,

*School Commissioner.*



## ONONDAGA COUNTY—SECOND DISTRICT.

The attendance of pupils of a school age is less than formerly in this district, affected, in part, by rate-bills. The condition of school houses is decidedly improving, and several new ones are being built. The fuel used for warming is mostly wood, while a few use coal, and two union school houses are warmed by furnaces. The supply of school apparatus is very limited, and varies in different districts. In some they have but a globe or a county map, a State map, or a map of the United States; while some have each of these, a series of outline maps, and a partial set of instruments to illustrate the principles of philosophy. A few districts have squandered their library money in the purchase of an astronomical chart, costing five dollars; and, to make the case more aggravated, this purchase is always confined to the very smallest schools. The National series of Readers and Sanders' series, Thomson's and Davies' Arithmetics, Clark's Grammars, and Monteith and McNally's Geographies, Lossing's and Willson's Histories, and the Spencerian system of Penmanship, are the chief text-books. The proportion of male to female teachers, who follow teaching as a permanent employment, is as one to ten. The number of male teachers to female during the past summer was as one to twenty. The numbers employed for the coming winter are about equal.

My examinations are mostly written, which embrace the following subjects, viz.: Arithmetic, algebra, geography, grammar, history, and physiology. The examinations have been mostly by topics—my effort being to throw teachers entirely upon their own resources. I have granted only the second and third grades of certificates, and a majority of the former. The Onondaga academy is the only one in the district. The number of students varies from one hundred to one hundred and seventy-five. The main building is of brick, three stories high, and is very commodious. The library, though not extensive, is rapidly improving. The apparatus for illustrating the natural sciences, although not complete, is in a good condition. The principal has taken the school upon his own hands, collects his own tuition bills, and receives all the moneys derived therefrom, beside those coming from the State. In each of its departments it is decidedly improving, and the teachers that have been educated in the teachers' class have very generally been successful. There have been some five or six private schools in the district during the past year. The number of pupils in attendance has varied from seven to twenty-five, and the number of such schools is decreasing. The libraries are like a sealed book. Most of the districts commenced their libraries with the purchase of "Harper's School District Library," and have since added such works as have come from the pen of our popular writers from year to year. Newspapers and periodicals seem to have taken the place of district libraries. In several instances, trustees

have inquired if the State Department could not empower districts to dispose of their libraries, and use the avails in the purchase of maps, charts, globes, &c. And while the libraries, if sold, would bring but a small price, still their value thus expended would be of much service to the district. Can it be done? The fact of my acting as commissioner only since the first of October last, obliges me to omit several points mentioned in the circular.

Respectfully submitted.

E. P. HOWE,

*School Commissioner.*

### THIRD DISTRICT.

To HON. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

In pursuance of the requirements contained in your circular to school commissioners, dated August 27th, 1862, I herewith transmit to the Department the following brief report:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—About two-thirds of the persons of school age attend school during a term.

There are 103 school districts under my supervision, in 21 of which no rate-bills were collected during the year past; whilst in the remaining districts rate-bills were collected amounting to \$2,980.

The effect of rate-bills on attendance is not so apparent as a disposition on the part of some trustees to employ cheap teachers; or, in other words, to “beat them down” to the “lowest price,” and then have them teach only long enough to use up the public money—in many instances, only six months.

Provisions for instruction of pupils are ample in at least two-thirds of the districts. Sites for school houses are usually well selected, with ample playgrounds. Nine-tenths of the houses are in good condition. Nine are built of brick, seventeen of stone, and seventy-seven are frame buildings. Nine of the latter are about used up, and their places are deserving of better edifices. The school houses are all warmed by the heat from stoves, and all but *one*, I think, are furnished with a black-board. They are ventilated by the lowering of the window-sash, or by a ventilator in the wall over head. Not more than half of the schools are supplied with suitable maps and globes.

The text-books principally in use are the National Readers and Sanders' series of Readers, Thomson's, Adams', and Davies' Arithmetic, Davies' Algebra, Clark's and Brown's Grammars, Green's Analysis, Colton and Fitch's Geography, and McNally's Geography, and the Spencerian system of Penmanship. Pupils usually begin to attend school at about the age of five, and end their attendance at about twenty.

TEACHERS.—Two hundred and eleven different teachers have been employed during the year—one hundred and forty-two of whom were females, and sixty-nine males. About one-third follow teaching as a

permanent employment. The wages of females will average about \$9, and those of males about \$18 per month, exclusive of board. Their attendance at institutes and associations is generally fair. In our examinations of teachers, we generally begin on miscellaneous subjects, including the science of government and methods of governing schools, and then take up other branches, such as reading, writing, physical, political, and mathematical geography, history, and physiology, and algebra to a limited extent. I find them better prepared to teach reading, writing, grammar, and arithmetic than the other branches. They are more deficient in the science of government, physiology, and physical geography than in any of the other branches.

About two-thirds have studied some work treating of the "Theory and Practice of Teaching." About one-eighth of the certificates granted annually are of the first grade, about one-fourth of the third grade, and the balance of the second grade. The demand for teachers of high qualifications is becoming more apparent, and a willingness to pay a reasonable compensation for their services is also increasing. There are four Normal school graduates engaged in teaching in my district, who succeed well, are zealous for improvement, and their services are in good demand.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS have rapidly decreased within the last two years. When I entered upon the duties of my office on the 1st of January, 1861, there were seven within the bounds of my district, and at this time but two.

DISTRICT LIBRARIES.—Judging from the exceedingly careless manner in which nine-tenths of the libraries are kept, and from an almost universal expression of the people against them, I have come to the conclusion that district libraries have had their day. Public sentiment seems to be decidedly in favor of applying the library money to the payment of teachers' wages.

TRUSTEES.—The people are gradually becoming favorable to the plan of having but one trustee in a school district. In many of the districts no trustee was elected at the last annual meeting—the inhabitants preferring to let the "old ones drop out" until there shall but one remain. About one-half of the districts have adopted the new plan, and in those the business is more promptly attended to. The trustees in about three-fourths of the districts have complied with "No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction" by purchasing blank-books for their own, as well as for the teacher's use.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.—Our last institute was in session twenty-six days. One hundred and four teachers were in attendance—eighty of whom were ladies, and twenty-four gentlemen. (Another institute was in session in this county at the same time.) N. A. Calkins, of New York city, gave instruction in "Object Teaching;" J. Madison Watson, on "Elocution and Calisthenics;" Dr. Baker, of Onondaga county, lectured



on "Anatomy and Physiology;" Prof. Clark, of Homer, lectured on "Grammar," and gave instructions for writing sentences in diagram. The commissioners occupied the remainder of the time in different class exercises. The people were highly pleased with the exercises of the institute.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—We have one hundred and twelve teachers employed, when all the departments are filled—all of whom are visited by the commissioner at least once in each term; and to accomplish which he has to travel a distance of at least 750 miles.

It occupies about twelve weeks in each term to make these visits, hence the commissioner is obliged to commence his routine generally about three weeks after the schools begin; and he must improve his time, if he expects to accomplish his purpose before they close.

In the spring and fall, prior to the commencement of the schools, the commissioner advertises in the county newspapers the time and place he will meet in each town for examination of those desiring a license to teach.

We have an association of teachers that meet once in four weeks in different parts of the district for mutual improvement. At these meetings the commissioner is always expected to be present.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

BENJ. S. GREGORY,

*School Commissioner.*

*December 30, 1862.*

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## ONTARIO COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.\*

To the Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Supt. Pub. Instruction* :

The common schools of this assembly district have, under the kind guidance of Almighty God, been in a prosperous condition during the past year. While the present civil war has seriously injured our commerce, and disarranged the financial prosperity of our country, the common schools have been sustained, and the interest of parents and teachers has never been more apparent. For this mark of his favor we return thanks to God.

DELAY IN MAKING REPORT.—It has been difficult to get together the reports of the various trustees this season, owing to their misapprehension of the time when their reports became due. This has occasioned, on the part of some, a hasty and careless style of report, not containing accurate returns of some of the items required.

ATTENDANCE OF PERSONS OF SCHOOL AGE.—The number of persons attending school falls largely below the number of persons of school age. Flourishing academies and seminaries, within reach of nearly all, reduce the attendance of the older class of pupils.

**RATE-BILLS.**—Rate-bills, in many districts, materially reduce the attendance of the poorer classes, although liberal exemptions are made in most cases. They also affect the attendance of the children of those who are amply able to pay for a school beyond the time required by law. In most cases, they work injury to the cause of education. A system of free schools would undoubtedly be superior to our present system, could it be fairly tried.

**EARLY CLOSE OF SCHOOLS.**—Too many of the schools are closed as soon as the public money is exhausted. This is due to the fact that many of the districts are much too small to support a prosperous school.

**SITES AND CHARACTER OF SCHOOL HOUSES.**—The provisions for instruction are too meagre in nearly every district. But little pains have been taken by wealthy districts to make the school house and its grounds attractive to pupils. Usually no play-ground is provided, aside from the public highway; and the school house too often encroaches upon the public property.

**VENTILATION.**—Generally, the buildings are inconvenient, and devoid of proper ventilation.

**FURNITURE.**—The furniture is seldom adapted to the convenience and comfort of the pupils and teachers. Yet there are a few houses fitted up with tasteful seats and desks, well arranged. Some school yards are of ample size, and tastefully ornamented with trees and shrubs. In such cases I have always found the school more progressive and useful than its neighbors.

**APPARATUS.**—In apparatus there is a general deficiency, except in blackboards. The globe is becoming almost unknown, and the cases of Holbrook's apparatus are mostly destroyed or badly damaged.

**TEXT BOOKS.**—But little uniformity in text books prevails. To this subject the commissioners of this county have given much attention. The Readers of Prof. Willson, and Parker and Watson, are displacing those of Mr. Sanders. Sanders' and Town's works on Orthography are in general use. Robinson's series of Mathematics are rapidly gaining ground. The Grammars of Brown and Clark are in general use. Bullions' Grammar is used in a few schools. Monteith and McNally's Geographies are deservedly popular, and will be introduced into nearly every school during the coming year. It has been our custom to encourage the substitution of history and composition in place of algebra and other studies properly beyond the province of the common school. Willson's Histories are commonly used. The branches named are those generally pursued. Physiology and drawing are very rarely studied.

**AGE OF PUPILS.**—Pupils are mostly between the ages of 5 and 18 years.

**PROGRESS.**—The schools share in the general awakening and progress in systematic instruction adopted during later years.

**URGENT WANTS.**—The urgent wants are more punctual and regular attendance, greater comforts and facilities for instruction by means of

apparatus, and more active and hearty co-operation on the part of the patrons of the schools.

TEACHERS.—A large proportion of our teachers are females. The services of male teachers are usually confined to winter terms. Some of both sexes follow teaching for a term of years, but few make it a "profession." The wages of teachers varies largely; perhaps that of males might be stated at twenty-five dollars per month; that of females at about one-half of that sum. The interest manifested in teachers' institutes is very gratifying, and constantly on the increase. The examinations have been conducted in part orally, and the rest written. It has been found best to combine the two methods. Our teachers are best fitted for teaching arithmetic and grammar; and most deficient in geography and spelling, with analysis of words. Very few have studied works on "theory and practice." At present, the demand for teachers of high qualifications exceeds the supply. Many of our best teachers have enlisted in the Union army, which gives rise to a large demand for first class teachers.

GRADING LICENSES.—The matter of grading certificates has not furnished sufficient evidences of its utility to warrant its continuance in this district, and but one form of license is granted.

NORMAL SCHOOL.—We experience but little profit from the existence of the State Normal school. To us it is practically a dead letter. Those sent from this county have not redeemed, in any reasonable degree, their pledges. We can report the services of only two pupils from the Normal school during the past year. Until some means are employed to enforce the claims of the common schools upon such persons, we expect to reap but little direct benefit from the Normal school. Some of the teachers fitted for the work by attendance at institutes and the teachers' classes organized in our academies, far excel in zeal, influence and success, most of our "Normals" who *condescend* to common school teaching.

NORMAL CLASSES.—During the past year the Regents have interfered with our plans of improvement, by withdrawing their patronage from the Normal classes at Geneva union school and Phelps union school. These classes were the source of great benefit to the common schools of this district. But we are left without a training class for teachers this year, while the second assembly district enjoys the benefit of two classes within its limits, one at Canandaigua academy, and one at Naples academy: It is sincerely hoped that the Regents will restore at least one of our Normal classes to us.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—There are but few private schools in this jurisdiction. The number of schools and pupils does not vary materially from those of past years.

COLORS SCHOOLS.—The only colored school is situated in the village of Geneva. The instruction is provided for in common with the rest of the schools of the place.



UNION SCHOOLS.—The public schools of the villages of Geneva and Phelps are the only union free schools in this district.

LIBRARIES.—There is a want of accuracy in the trustees reports under the head of libraries. Some have failed entirely to report the number of volumes. Many libraries are in a bad condition, owing to the want of proper care in rebinding damaged books. The subjects of the works in these libraries are mostly histories, biographies and travels. Doubtless great improvement might be made in the selection of books for these collections. As a means for the dissemination of useful knowledge, they cannot be over-rated. In this district they are largely used and well appreciated by the people.

PRIVATE LIBRARIES.—There are few private libraries in families of this district, but the newspaper is to be found in every house. The effect of newspapers is to increase the reading of library books, for the purpose of extending the information on subjects treated of in such papers.

TRUSTEES.—There is a gradual change of sentiment in favor of one trustee, and where the system has been in operation it is usually retained. No positive information can be had at this time on the subject of the compliance of trustees with No. 116 of the Code, but it is thought that the statement of movable property is rarely made. The proper blank books are usually supplied, but few teachers are required to verify their lists by oath.

INSTITUTE.—The statistical and financial report of our last teachers' institute has already been transmitted to you. No institute has ever been held in this county excelling the last in interest and general usefulness. Instruction was given by N. A. Calkins, of New York, on methods of object teaching. The methods presented have been largely used in this county for many years past. Yet the exercises were highly profitable, as they presented the subject to many persons about to begin their labors as teachers. Rev. S. S. Hughson, of Rushville, N. Y., gave instruction in vocal music, with a lecture on music in common schools.

Noah T. Clarke, A. M., principal of Canandaigua academy, gave daily instruction in mathematical science, and topics associated with the theory and practice of teaching. W. L. McLaughlin, A. M., associate principal of the same school, conducted daily exercises and discussions in English grammar. Commissioner Farley, of Livingston county, had the subject of orthography, and especially phonetics, assigned to him. Commissioner Francis, of Livingston county, gave some very interesting instruction in mathematical geography. Commissioner Robinson, of Wayne county, awakened great interest in the subject of government. Benj. Richards, A. M., principal of Ontario female seminary, gave instruction in arithmetic.

Rev. Dr. Dagget, of Canandaigua, lectured on "Manner," and gave readings from various authors.

LECTURES.—Lectures were given by N. A. Calkins of New York, on

"Object Lessons" and "Principles of Education;" David Beattie, commissioner of 1st district of Ontario, on "Physical Geography" and "Coast Survey;" Mr. Reynolds, Bristol, N. Y., "Man and his Universe;" Dr. J. B. Hayes, of Canandagua, N. Y., on "Physiology;" E. G. Tyler, Prin. Ontario Female Seminary, Canandagua, N. Y., subject, "Influence of Facilities of Intercommunication on General Education."

The gentlemen named conducted exercises in the subjects annexed to their names; but the larger part of the work was performed by members of the institute. One excellent feature of the last institute was its *social* character. Good feeling and fellowship were apparent throughout the session. A general interest in all the exercises was apparent, and few persons left during the session.

DETAIL OF COMMISSIONER'S DUTIES.—My duties began on the 1st of May last; at which time I was appointed to fill a vacancy occasioned by the resignation of L. B. Antisdale. I entered immediately upon the duties of the office, and commenced holding a series of classes for the examination of teachers. I have spent the time faithfully in the service of the common school interests. I have visited every district in the department of duty, except two. In those districts the schools had closed for the season before my arrival in the vicinity. Some six others were closed on the day of my proposed visit. It has been the business of these visits to comply with the requirements of the "Code," in its instructions to commissioners; deeming the wisdom of that instrument a sufficient guide to my steps, until experience should mark out such variations as might be desirable. I am warranted in saying that the progress of the schools of this assembly district, during the past year, has been very great. Our teachers are learning rapidly the great truth, that *love* is the key to success. It has been interesting and gratifying to note the uniform attachment of the pupils to their teachers. It is not usual at the close of the day to see the school room cleared in an instant; but pupils often linger until the departure of the teacher makes it necessary for them to leave. What a pity that our people show so little interest in making the school site a lovely and attractive spot, in its surroundings—to make it a *home*, and the school a *family*. To these happy instances there are, of course, exceptions; but they are rare. But our progress will not allow us to rest. While we gratefully dwell upon our good fortune in this day of trial, we are not content with our attainments, but high in front of our ranks we bear the motto of our glorious State—"Excelsior."

Respectfully submitted by your ob't servant,

DAVID BEATTIE,

*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

BRISTOL, December 26, 1862.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction* :

Sir—The common schools of the second district of Ontario will, in my opinion, compare favorably with those of any other rural district in western New York. Very many of the school houses of this county were built in the primeval days of architecture, but they are being removed to give place to more convenient and spacious buildings. The site of the new school house is generally an improvement upon that of the old one—that having been built upon the roadside with the street as the children's only lawful playground, whilst with the new one a playground is commonly found, fenced and decorated with shade trees. One necessary out-building is to be found with every school house in this district. There are generally no wood-houses. To describe the furniture of one school house is for all: A stove, water-pail and cup, black-board, seats and desks for pupils, and teachers's desk and chair. They are ventilated by a ventilator in the ceiling, or by lowering the upper sash of the windows. The supply of school apparatus is not large, although in some schools may be seen a tellurian, some geological specimens, astronomical and physiological charts, &c.

The age at which pupils begin their attendance at school is from four to seven years—commonly when about six years of age, which I am glad to observe, as there is not so much need of a cradle in the school-room as there was a few years since. They leave the common school to attend the higher schools, or to perform some labor, either mental or manual, at eighteen years of age, consequently have but twelve years to attend the common school, and only the winter term of that after they are twelve years of age. Only about one-half of the persons of school age are to be found at school. The effect of the rate-bills is quite salutary, as the children of the indigent are exempted and provided for by tax. The number of male and female teachers for the schools this winter is about equal—female teachers teach most of the schools in summer. Teaching is not made a permanent business or employment, as the wages in rural schools are not sufficient for one to make it a profession. Most persons teach from three to eight terms, and then seek other employment, leaving the field to others—commonly the young and inexperienced.

The wages in summer is about \$2 per week, in winter \$20 per month. Nearly one-half of the teachers attend the institute, and thereby learn and put in practice many excellent methods of instruction. Three-fourths of them have read or studied some work treating of the Theory and Practice of Teaching. The second grade certificate is the one commonly given; in cases of decided merit, the first; and for beginners and teachers for some particular and less advanced school, the third is given. The demand for teachers of the better class increases each year, which



stimulates them to qualify themselves to supply the wants of the school. There are no Normal school graduates teaching in this district at the present time. There are three academies in this district, each in a prosperous condition; the teachers' class of each has benefited the common schools by giving to persons that thorough drill necessary to qualify them for practical teachers.

The number of private schools is less than in former years, as one academy has annihilated four. There is but one regularly organized private school in this district, with an attendance of thirteen pupils.

District school libraries are in a very low state, but little thought of, and poorly cared for. There are some valuable books in most of them; but private libraries, periodicals, and newspapers furnish reading for most families. Still, a small proportion of the inhabitants depend upon the district library for reading matter.

There is but one trustee in a majority of the school districts, and it is very generally conceded that business is more promptly done by one than three. The only drawback to the one trustee system is the hiring of relatives or particular friends; nevertheless, one is generally preferred. The trustees for the most part comply with No. 116 Code of Public Instruction.

My labor during the year is to visit one hundred and sixteen schools as many times as possible, which is commonly twice, spread over an area of territory forty miles from north to south, and thirty miles from east to west. Add, if you please, three times this distance for going around, up and down hills, and you obtain a slight idea of the number of miles traveled.

Inspecting schools is not all the labor. The regular advertised time for teachers' examinations, both spring and fall, occupies one month, besides many, very many days spent in examining one or more applicants for license at a time at my place of residence. Holding institutes, making apportionment, collecting trustees' reports, and making an abstract therefrom, requires labor. Very much of my time is required in ascertaining the boundaries of school districts; hearing applications for altering the same, and, in some cases, making the proposed alteration; now and then a case of uniting one school district with another; selling the district property and apportioning the money received therefor; counseling with district officers, &c., &c.

Respectfully yours,

D. E. WILSON,  
*School Commissioner.*

## ORANGE COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

COLDENHAM, November 20, 1862.

*To the Superintendent of Public Instruction :*

The school commissioner of the first assembly district, Orange county, in compliance with the requirement of the Department, respectfully submits the following report:

The whole number of children of school age, as reported by the trustees of the several school districts, for the year ending September 30, 1862, is 12,112, of which 6,587 attended the public schools for a longer or shorter period during the year. Adding estimated numbers in non-reporting districts to the preceding, will give 12,233 children of school age, and 6,651 as attending school.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, rate-bills have little or no effect on the attendance of pupils, and there seems to be no public sentiment in regard to them.

The provisions for the instruction of pupils are 81 school houses, containing 103 rooms. Twenty-one of these buildings have been erected within the last six years, and ten have been more or less improved, and some of them enlarged. The remaining fifty, with perhaps two or three exceptions, may be considered tolerable school houses. There are 63 framed, 10 brick, and 8 stone buildings.

Nearly all the sites for school houses are located where pure air and dry grounds prevail. Only 25 of these sites, however, are large enough for playgrounds; 33 have small unfenced yards, and 23 are very little larger than the space occupied by the school houses. Shade trees are in most instances but accidental appendages. Nearly all the school houses have one out-building attached, and several have more than one. These are, in a majority of cases, in quite good condition. Of the school houses, 11 have the best style of modern school furniture, 36 are furnished very comfortably and conveniently, and 33 have old style—long desks and benches.

Except the village of Newburgh, the principal school buildings are warmed by stoves placed in the rooms, and are ventilated by dropping the upper window sash. A few have ventilators in the ceilings. In the village of Newburgh, furnaces, heaters and stoves are used for warming the buildings. For ventilation, registers, ventilators and windows are used.

About one-half the schools are supplied with a terrestrial globe, nearly all have outline maps and blackboards, and a few have numeral frames. District No. 1, Monroe, has a very good philosophical apparatus.

The text books in general use are Sanders' Spellers and Readers, Brown's, Pinneo's, and Smith's Grammars, Thomson's Written Arithmetic, and Stoddard's Mental. The studies generally pursued are spelling,

reading, writing, geography, grammar, mental and written arithmetic. Algebra has become quite a common study in the schools.

The ages at which pupils begin and end their attendance at school can be obtained with no degree of correctness. They generally begin perhaps at about five years of age, and end at sixteen.

The general progress of the schools is very fair. They need a larger number of thoroughly qualified and devoted teachers. It might be said, perhaps, that their most urgent want is greater interest on the part of the patrons. A large majority of the people are culpably indifferent as to the condition of the public schools, and the kind of instruction given in them.

Of the 141 different teachers engaged during the last year 59 were males and 82 females.

The teachers are about equally divided in reference to making the business a permanent or temporary employment. It is hardly possible to give anything like a definite answer to the inquiry, "How many months or years do they generally devote to teaching?" Those who make it a temporary employment generally teach when they can make it pay better than anything else, while those who make it a permanent business pursue it till some unexpected occurrence changes their employment.

The average wages of males is about \$25 per month; and of females, \$18. In a large majority of the schools the same wages are paid both in winter and summer. When a difference is made it does not amount to more than five dollars per month.

About one-half the teachers, in this assembly district, attended the teachers' institute held in August last. But a very small number attend, regularly, the meetings of the county educational society.

The examinations of teachers for certificates are conducted by oral and written questions, in such a manner as to elicit their knowledge of the principles, as well as the facts, of the branches of study which they are required to understand. They are generally best prepared to teach arithmetic and grammar; and most deficient in spelling, reading and geography. About one-half have studied one or more works on the "Theory and Practice of Teaching."

The commissioner granted, during the last year, 88 certificates; of which 5 were of the first, 57 of the second, and 26 of the third grade. The supply of highly qualified teachers is not very large. There is quite a demand for their services, but there is an unwillingness on the part of trustees to pay the wages which first class teachers can command.

The number of Normal school graduates, is 7; under graduates, 3. They are, perhaps, more successful than teachers of the same grade who have not enjoyed the advantages of the Normal school. Their influence and zeal for improvement are greater, perhaps, than teachers of about the same ability who have not attended the Normal school. Their



services are in good demand, especially in districts where graduates have been employed; and the demand would be considerably increased if our rural districts would get into the habit of paying more liberally for teachers' services.

ACADEMIES.—The number of students in Chester academy, October 2d, 1862, was 76; of which one-half were over 16 years of age, and the remaining half between the ages of 12 and 16 years.

There is one building containing seven rooms.

The library contains 400 volumes of standard books. The apparatus, chemical and philosophical, cost over \$800. The studies pursued are the common and higher English branches, and the classics. The principal receives about \$1,000 per annum, and his assistant a salary of \$350. The school is supported by the appropriation from the Literature Fund, and charges for tuition. Rates of tuition per term, from \$5.50 to \$8. The practical benefit of the teachers' class to the common schools is scarcely perceptible.

The number of students in the Montgomery academy, October 25th, 1862, was 25, ranging from twelve to twenty-one years of age.

There is one building containing five rooms.

The library contains 400 volumes of standard books. The apparatus, chemical and philosophical, cost \$340. The studies pursued are the common and higher English branches, Latin, Greek and French. I do not know what the principal's compensation is, nor the wages of his assistant. The sources of support are the Literature Fund and tuition charges. Rates of tuition, from \$3 to \$6 per term.

The Newburgh academy is included in the report of the free schools in the village of Newburgh, it being one branch of them. It contains six rooms, two of which are large, and generally pretty well filled with students. The ages of students are about the same as in Chester academy. The library is merged in the public school library of the village. It has little or no apparatus. The studies pursued are higher English, classics, and some of the modern languages. The principal's salary is \$800 per annum; male assistant, \$500; and female principal, about \$400. The sources of support are the School Fund, taxation and school lands. Rates of tuition, \$10 per term for students residing outside of the corporation, and free to all within it.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—There are 32 private schools, with an attendance of 569 pupils. As compared with former years, they vary but little.

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.—There are three schools which may be classed as parochial—one Protestant and two Roman Catholic. The number of pupils who attend the Protestant school, is 25. The number who attend the two Catholic schools, is 430. These schools have good buildings, which are well furnished. They are supplied each with a very good library and apparatus, and are generally well conducted.

COLORED SCHOOLS.—There is but one school for colored children; it is [Assem. No. 20.]

located in the village of Newburgh. The number of pupils instructed in it, is 60. It is supported by appropriation from the School Fund and taxation. It is free to all the colored children within the corporation.

UNION FREE SCHOOLS.—There are none under my supervision.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—A large number of these are in very good condition, the remaining ones are in quite a neglected state. The books are mostly historical, biographical, and narratives of travels. In several of the libraries are found scientific and miscellaneous works. There is but little light reading matter, and but few religious books, in proportion to the whole number of volumes. A large proportion of the books, in a majority of the libraries, are better adapted to adult than to children's minds. The library books are but little read in perhaps more than half the districts. In those where the library money amounts to ten dollars or over, the libraries are kept in better condition, and held in higher estimation, than in districts which receive a smaller amount, and which is not, in all cases, applied to the purchase of books.

PRIVATE LIBRARIES, &c.—Reliable information in regard to these can be obtained only by calling on every family in each school district, which, I suppose, the commissioner will be excused for not doing. It can be said without exaggerating, perhaps, that nearly every family takes one or more newspapers. The private libraries, periodicals and newspapers, certainly greatly reduce the demand for the books of the district school library.

TRUSTEES.—Thirteen districts only have one trustee. Three or four districts, which had but one trustee, have returned to three. The trustees have generally complied with so much of No. 116, of the Code, as relates to furnishing two blank books. Probably nearly all fail to make a statement of the movable property of the district.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.—The information required, in regard to teachers' institutes, was furnished the Department, in August last, at the close of the last one held in this county. At the commencement of the institute there was little public interest manifested in the exercises, but before the close a marked increase of interest was shown.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—The school commissioner has twice visited every district, in which school was in session during the whole or a part of the year, for the purpose of inspecting the school; has visited more than half the districts a third time, for the purpose of collecting information required in making his reports; has filled appointments to meet teachers in the several towns in his district, for the purpose of examination for teachers' certificates, twice during the year; has attended four meetings of the county educational society, and about the same number of meetings of town societies; has made several addresses at these meetings, and at the meetings of the inhabitants of several districts; has acted with Commissioner Clark in annulling a joint district, dividing it and attaching its parts to other districts; has made two or three alter-

ations of school district boundaries in his own district; has, with Commissioner Clark, organized and conducted a teachers' institute, which was in session eleven days, issued circulars to teachers and prepared notices for newspapers; has distributed all the blanks and circulars received from the Department, and made the required reports; attended the meeting of school officers at Albany; in short, the duties of the office have absorbed his whole time and attention. One of its most important duties, perhaps, that of advising and consulting with district school officers, has occupied no inconsiderable portion of his time.

ALEX. BEATTIE,

*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

ATTENDANCE.—The whole number of persons of school age reported for the year 1862 is 11,203; the number reported as having attended school, 6,526. Attendance on the average begins at five and ends at sixteen. Making a liberal allowance for those reported under five and over sixteen, the attendance would still seem, from the foregoing figures, to be irregular. Such is really the case. Teachers' lists generally show an average attendance differing but little from two-thirds of the whole number of names.

RATE-BILLS diminish the average attendance in perhaps about one-third of the schools in the district; to what extent cannot fully be determined. In some districts their effect is so slight as not to be much felt. In others the schools are nearly or quite broken up.

SCHOOL HOUSES are generally comfortable, so far as warmth is concerned, but defective in means of ventilation, and not unfrequently inconvenient as regards size and arrangement of room. The whole number of rooms in which children are taught, not including parochial and private schools and incorporated academies, is one hundred and nineteen.

The whole number of school houses is one hundred and twelve. The number of school houses in good condition, and in the construction of which some attention has been paid to ventilation, size, and convenience of room, is sixty-six. Those in the construction of which economy seems to have been the paramount consideration—the rooms being too small, and not well ventilated; the walls low, the seats for the children not properly constructed, and no recitation seats provided—thirty. The number that should be immediately replaced by new ones is sixteen. All these are warmed by stoves placed in the school-room, with one exception—that is warmed by heated air from a furnace underneath.

SITES.—Seventy-two school houses have eligible sites—the school house occupying only a portion of the lot; enough having been left for a suitable playground for the children without their being compelled to use the highway as such, and the general surroundings pleasant. The remaining forty ineligible.



OUT-BUILDINGS.—Not more than half are supplied with out-buildings of any kind whatever. Condition middling.

The kind and supply of school apparatus consists of blackboards (with which all but two or three districts are supplied), outline maps, and globes, with which about half the districts are supplied.

TEXT-BOOKS.—Spellers, Town's; Readers, Sanders' series; Grammars, Smith's, Brown's, Bullions', and Wells'—Smith's generally used; Geographies, Smith's and Mitchell's; Philosophies, Comstock's; Arithmetics, Thomson's and Stoddard's series—Thomson's generally used; Algebras, Day's and Davies'; Histories, Willson's and Willard's; Physiology, Cutter's—supply, to a certain extent, inadequate. Teachers frequently complain, and justly, of their inability to classify the pupils in their schools satisfactorily, because of the insufficiency and want of uniformity in text-books. The evil might be remedied, in part, if trustees would assume the responsibility of determining the kind of text-books to be used; otherwise the remedy is made to depend on the influence of the teacher with the parents—that influence being too often exerted ineffectually.

The general progress of schools is fair, all things considered. There is a great lack of interest, on the part of employers. To this may be attributed irregular attendance, deficiency in the supply of text-books, and the too frequent and generally unnecessary change of teachers. I do not wish to convey the impression that parents feel no interest in the education of their children; but the interest felt is not strong enough to compel the adoption of the most effectual means by which to gain the desired end.

The number of teachers employed in the assembly district during the past year is one hundred and ninety-five, of whom seventy-four are males, and one hundred and twenty-one females. Wages in summer, including board, on an average, about \$18 per month; in winter, about \$23. The examinations of teachers are principally oral, consisting of explanations by teachers of principles they are expected to teach, together with their method of conducting a school. They are found most deficient in history and grammar. The certificates granted are mostly of the second grade—comparatively few of the first and third. The demand for teachers of high qualifications is somewhat limited, as there are but few schools in the district that require teachers of more than ordinary acquirements. The wages of such teachers would be comparatively high, is another reason why the demand is limited. The number of Normal school graduates and undergraduates at present employed is four. They are among the most successful teachers in the district. This district has probably been benefited less by the services of Normal graduates as teachers than most others, owing to the smallness of schools, and the consequent inability of districts to pay high wages.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—The number of private schools is twenty-two; the number of children attending them, six hundred and three.

There is one parochial school, with an attendance of 150 pupils. One school for colored children, located in the village of Goshen, with an attendance of about twenty. It forms a part of the district school.

One union free school, organized under the law of 1853; located at Port Jervis, in the town of Deerpark.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—In a majority of districts, but little attention is paid to libraries, further than to elect a librarian yearly. Comparatively few districts have even a catalogue of their books. They are taken out, and returned at pleasure; many are never returned. In some districts, it has formerly been the custom to have the books returned once a year. Even that has been discontinued. They now report by guess. One trustee informed me that their library is rapidly diminishing—almost half the books being gone, notwithstanding they have always applied the library money to the purchase of books. At the same time, there are some that are fully appreciated and read; but the number is so few compared with the whole, that I am satisfied the money expended on them could be made productive of a greater amount of good by applying it to other purposes.

PRIVATE LIBRARIES, PERIODICALS, AND NEWSPAPERS.—I have no means of determining the number of families supplied with private libraries. Most families are supplied with some periodical or newspaper, which, I am led to believe, is read to the exclusion of almost everything else.

TRUSTEES.—The whole number of districts having but one trustee is sixteen. The sentiment of the people seems to be decidedly in favor of three. Trustees are sometimes disposed to show partiality in the employment of teachers, contrary to the wishes of a majority of the district. This is less likely to happen with three than with one, and is, perhaps, the principal reason that three are preferred.

DETAIL OF LABORS, &c.—My time has been fully occupied in making apportionments, copying reports, altering districts, attending institutes, meeting teachers, and visiting schools. In fact, I have not been able to visit quite all the schools the second time during the past year. During the month of March and the early part of April the roads are generally so bad, that traveling is inconvenient. That time is occupied in making the apportionment and distributing copies to the several towns. Again in July the schools are mostly vacant. The time is occupied in arranging the preliminaries for holding an institute, so that but little spare time is really had.

Respectfully, &c.,

H. H. CLARK.

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### OSWEGO COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

HON. V. M. RICE, *State Superintendent Public Instruction:*

In addition to the financial and statistical abstract of the reports of trustees already in your hands, I have but little of *particular* interest to report.

Oswego county comprises three commissioners' districts, exclusive of the city of Oswego. District No. 1, embraces the six western towns, and is about equally divided by the Oswego river. In extent of territory it is much smaller than either of the other districts, while the number of schools is a little above the average, there being, usually, one hundred and six schools in session at the same time in the district.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS.—There are very few, if any, localities in the district where new school districts can be advantageously erected. On the other hand there are several small, *weak* districts which ought to be consolidated with others. One such consolidation has been effected during the past school year, with the unanimous consent of the people. Others are in contemplation, and will be made as soon as the minds of the people are prepared for the change.

The formation of small districts, except under very peculiar circumstances, should be discouraged. It is better that children should walk a mile, or even farther, to a well conducted school, which is kept in session from eight to ten months in the year, than to be accommodated nearer home, under the instruction of the ever-changing, low graded, inexperienced teachers, which most small districts from necessity employ.

SCHOOL HOUSES.—The school houses are as good as those of the average of country districts in this part of the State. Three eras of school houses are traceable. The first was the era of *log* school houses. This was in the days of the early settlers, from forty to sixty years ago, when the youth thought little of walking three or four miles to the log school house in the "settlement," where the "master's" greatest ambition was to get his scholars through the mysteries of the "Rule of Three." Grammars, geographies, etc., were among the rarities of those days. Nevertheless, some of the soundest men that have left the impress of their characters upon their age, acquired their knowledge of the "rudiments" in just such schools. The last vestige of this style of school architecture has passed from this district, and is now seldom heard of, except when some "old settler," in opposition to a vote for repairs, tells the meeting how and where *he* was *educated*. The *log* house was succeeded by the cheap framed building, without cornice or other pretensions to style, a dirty red, if not unpainted, with high, uncomfortable seats against the walls; and, if such a place existed in the district, located where two roads crossed, encroaching a foot or two upon the four rods of highway, with no playground, no shade trees, no wood-house, or out-house of any description. Discomfort seemed to have been a study with the builders of such edifices, and they were eminently successful. In this locality, however, I am happy to report that they are fast hurrying after their predecessors. No less than three of this class have been burned, "accidentally," of course, in this district during the year. "Peace to their *ashes*!"

These houses are now being gradually replaced by comfortable build-



ings, sometimes of brick or stone, but more generally of wood, conveniently arranged for school purposes; windows dropping from the top for ventilation; with commodious playgrounds, in some instances stocked with shade trees exhibiting a healthy growth. Occasionally flowers are cultivated by the children under the direction of the teacher. All this affords a pleasing contrast with the old-time buildings, of which by far too many are still standing.

The school houses in this district, at present, may be classified as follows: About one-half, *good*; one-fourth, *passable*; one-fourth, varying from *very poor* to a disgrace to the district that permits them to remain.

Notwithstanding new and commodious buildings are constantly taking the place of the unsightly and uncomfortable ones used as school houses, the work goes on too slowly. Perhaps no one obstacle stands so frequently in the way of the erection of new school houses, as the difficulties growing out of the change of site. It is often the case that the taxpayers will be unanimous in favor of building, but for some reason it becomes necessary to remove the site. Differences of opinion on this subject will so divide and excite the voters, that they will contend for years, and the old house remain, a monument of their folly.

I would inquire if the law may not be beneficially amended in this respect. For instance, where the inhabitants of a district cannot or will not agree, let them, by vote, appropriate a sufficient sum to pay for a site, and then invite a competent committee to locate the same, their decision to be final. The committee might consist of the commissioner, supervisor and town clerk; or it might consist of the supervisor and four justices of the peace. In a great majority of instances, I think, after having taken sides upon such a question, the people would be glad to submit it to such arbitrament.

Further: The Department should have power to withhold the public money from such districts as do not in a reasonable time furnish decent houses for school purposes.

TEACHERS.—Of the persons employed in teaching in this district, about one-third only are males; and they teach, as a general thing, only a few months in the winter. About one-third of the winter schools are taught by young women. I think the opinion is gaining ground, that even large schools can be better taught by women of education, tact, judgment and experience, than by inexperienced, immature, "green boys."

At the commencement of my term, I did not find the standard of qualification what I wished it to be. It is not so yet. There were a certain number of schools, requiring the same number of teachers. The only thing to be done was to take the material on hand, and to insist on a gradual elevation of the standard of qualifications. This has been done. The most of the teachers have taken hold with a will, and it gives me pleasure to bear testimony to the efficient manner in which they have seconded all my efforts to benefit the schools. A few "fossil"-like

specimens, too indolent to improve, and too dull to heed passing events, have found themselves dropped, and their places filled by the more efficient. On the whole, I have no reason to complain of the advance teachers have made during the past few years, both in literary qualifications and efficiency. The district, at present, does not furnish its own teachers. During the last winter nearly forty per cent. of the teachers came from out of the district. During the present winter the number is still greater. In the summer term, the percentage of "foreign" teachers, though considerable, is not so large.

One of the most potent aids in improving the qualifications of teachers, has been the district association. The method of conducting it has been this: Our sessions commence on Friday evenings, when we have a lecture upon some subject pertinent to the business of teaching. For this purpose we have levied alike upon clergymen, lawyers, doctors, professors, teachers and literary men generally. We have found them ever ready to respond. The day session is made up of class exercises, in which every teacher is expected to take part, interspersed with essays, addresses and discussions. I am of the opinion that class exercises are the most beneficial to the majority, because in them all are expected to participate, while in a discussion many are too timid to express an opinion, and soon lose an interest in the subject in hand. These meetings have been the means of infusing new life, spirit and ambition among our teachers, and especially is this the case with those who have been *constant* in their attendance.

The graduates of the Normal school are not much help to us. On leaving the school, if they are successful teachers, they generally obtain situations in the cities and out of the State, at rates of remuneration with which country schools cannot compete. We have, however, one graduate, and several undergraduates, teaching very successfully.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—The institutes in this county have generally been held jointly by the three commissioners, and from year to year there has been a gradual increase in attendance, and in the interest manifested. As the attendance from the second district has usually been rather limited, the acting commissioner of that district was of the opinion that, by holding a session within the district, he could induce a larger number of the teachers to attend. He was not mistaken. His institute was well attended, and was in all respects a successful enterprise. The institute of the first and third districts was more largely attended than any other session ever held in the county. The war having drawn largely from the ranks of the teachers, the attendance of females greatly preponderated, and the males in attendance were generally young, many of whom had never taught. Owing to this fact, the most of the time of the session was occupied in class drills and thorough reviews of the branches to be taught in the schools. The evenings were devoted to lectures, discussions, readings and music. I have never

known the attendance at an institute to be more regular, the interest more manifest, or the results more satisfactory.

**TEACHERS' CLASS.**—Falley seminary, located at Fulton, is near the centre of my district. This institution annually gives instruction to a class of about twenty teachers. The principal, Professor Griffin, gives this class his personal attention. The range of instruction given embraces the common school branches, practically and theoretically. The principal is very thorough himself, and teaches them carefully the science of teaching. At the end of the term the class is examined by the commissioner of this district, and they receive licenses according to their standing. The most of those who pass find employment in this district. The best comment upon the drilling they have received is their success in the school room. They seldom fail.

**TEXT BOOKS.**—I think it would be difficult to give a complete list of all the books used in this district. Clark's grammar has undisputed sway. Perhaps the greatest variety exists in the lists of arithmetics and geographies. In the former may be found Adams', Perkins', Blanchard's, Davies', Thomson's, and, lately, Robinson's; while the other embraces Mitchell's, Monteith and McNally's, Colton and Fitch's, Warren's, Cornell's, and others "too numerous to mention." But what makes it particularly perplexing, many, if not all of these, will sometimes be found in one school. In readers, Sanders' takes the lead, though Town's are found in many of the schools. Parker and Watson's have gained a sure foothold in some localities, and Willson's is found in a few schools. Spellers are about equally divided between Sanders' and Town's, with very rarely an old Elementary. Educators have been for the last twenty years clamoring for a uniformity in text books. I would care little for a uniformity throughout the commissioner's district, or even the towns, if it could be secured in the separate schools. I presume trustees have the authority to say what books shall be used in their schools respectively; indeed, in some of our best schools they do so. But trustees usually will not take the responsibility of dictating that their neighbors shall buy new books when they have old ones that will, in their opinion, answer the purpose. I can see no remedy for this difficulty, unless power be conferred upon some competent person or persons to decide what books shall be used in certain towns, or commissioners' districts, for a term of years. I do not think it would be well to confer this power upon the commissioner alone. It might subject him to temptations, or at least to imputations of an understanding with the book venders.

**DISTRICT LIBRARIES.**—I can report nothing very favorable in relation to the condition of the school district libraries. In some localities they are used and appreciated, but in many districts they have nearly fallen into disuse. In large districts, where the money received is considerable, and is expended for standard, popular and current works, the district library is still a good thing. I should regret to see a system so benefi-



cial in its designs, so creditable to the State, abandoned. The only remedy that I can suggest is to consolidate the libraries. Instead of school district, let there be town libraries. The moneys received by towns would be sufficient to secure standard and readable books, which, accumulating from year to year, would become valuable. A town librarian might be chosen, or the duties might be imposed upon the town clerk, and a slight compensation allowed to secure faithfulness. The duty of selecting the books might be imposed upon the town board, consisting of the supervisor, town clerk, and justices, who are generally intelligent men, if the town contain any. The Department could arrange with publishers to furnish books at wholesale prices, sending lists to town committees from which the selections could be made, and the books forwarded to them. In small towns one general repository would be sufficient; in large ones, several might be selected at the option of the town, and sub-agents appointed. When the books had been thoroughly read in one section of the town, they could be exchanged with the other. Some such change may save the library system, which, under the present management in many localities, is throwing away the money furnished.

TRUSTEES.—About one-half of the districts under my supervision elect a sole trustee. I think the plan is gradually growing into favor. Many districts which were at first alarmed at the "one man power" have since discovered that it is useless to employ three agents to do what one can better accomplish alone. Some districts which at first elected one have since elected three. I know of but one advantage which three possess over the one. The annual meetings are held in the second week in October. This is after teachers are beginning to look for schools. A sole trustee, just to vacate, does not like to engage a teacher to serve under another; neither should he. But two enterprising trustees, who hold over, will engage their man whenever they find him. This gives them the first choice of teachers when they choose to exercise it. On the whole, I do not think the law can be bettered in this respect. Let the people say whether they will have one or three agents. It is presumed that if either system has decided advantages over the other, the people will eventually discover it.

THE WAR.—There has no one class of persons in this region so generally gone to the war as have the teachers. They are serving in every capacity from private to captain, in nearly every field from the Potomac to New Orleans. The last call for troops nearly stripped this district of its male teachers. In several towns every one of them volunteered. Many have already yielded their lives a willing sacrifice in the cause of their country. I feel a just pride in the patriotism and disinterested valor which led them to make such fearful sacrifices. But the schools must, temporarily at least, suffer. A much larger proportion of young and inexperienced teachers than usual are in the schools. A large number who have been considered as effectually upon the retired list

are again in the field. Still some of our schools are not yet supplied, and some are teaching who would not be retained except that the alternative is no school at all.

COMMISSIONER'S DUTIES.—I do not suppose my round of duties differs materially from that of other commissioners. I find enough to do, and try to do it. I go into each town twice each year to examine teachers. I sometimes examine orally, sometimes I require the answers to be written; ordinarily, I think the two methods combined is the most satisfactory. I give but few first grade licenses, and not any until earned by successful teaching. I make it a point to visit each school at least once during each term; oftener if necessary. In some instances I remain in school during the day; but, ordinarily, half a day constitutes a visit. I always hold myself ready to counsel with trustees and others interested in school matters. I frequently attend school meetings where districts are in trouble, and can generally reconcile the differences. During the present winter I traveled thirty miles in one instance to find a competent teacher for a district without one. I find there is much labor connected with the getting up of a successful institute. It was especially so last fall, when I found it necessary to call on each teacher personally, in the different towns, to insure an attendance. There seems to be no end to the duties of a school commissioner. We do the most work and receive the least pay of any officer in the county.

Hoping that our schools may continue to prosper, and ultimately do all the good that is expected of them,

I am, yours truly,

JOHN A. PLACE,

*School Commissioner.*

FULTON, *December 30, 1862.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

PALERMO, N. Y., *December 6, 1862.*

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

Sir—The undersigned school commissioner for the second district in the county of Oswego respectfully submits the following report:

The number of persons of school age, as reported by the trustees, is 6,441; the number of persons who attended school during the past year is 5,070, or 78.7 per cent. of those who draw public money.

It seems to me that there might be an improvement, in respect to the apportionment of public money. My plan is this:

- 1st. Apportion the money to the counties according to population.
- 2d. Apportion one-third to the districts equally.
- 3d. Apportion the remaining two-thirds to the districts in proportion to the number of days sent to school.

Then every district would have a special interest to get every child of school age to attend school, and regularly; for in proportion as they

are sent they would receive money from the State to pay the expenses. Then, too, our schools need not be limited, as many now are, to "six months;" but they can continue as long as convenient for the children to attend, and receive their money from the State in proportion. Now, every person of school age in this county draws about sixty cents, and it does not make any difference in the amount whether he goes nine months or none.

All that many of our trustees care for is to get a teacher who has a license, that he can draw the public money; so that the trustee will not have to pay it out of his own pocket, and then have the school continue six months for the same reason.

The effect of rate-bills is to stop many children from going to school who would otherwise attend. Rate-bills have the same effect on children going to school that brakes do on car wheels.

I cannot give the public sentiment in respect to the school houses. There are 48 good school houses in this district—four of them built last summer; 22 ordinary, and 16 poor ones—6 of the 16 are very poor. District No. 14, Constantia, has no school house. They have not been able as yet to get a vote to build. They intend to build next summer, if they can agree on a site. Most of the school houses have one chair; quite a number have Mitchell's outline maps; some have varnished maps of the United States, and some of New York. There are a few of the new maps of New York State. A very few schools have globes; some of my teachers will have globes this winter. I should judge that thirty or forty schools have an astronomical chart. I do not know by whom it is published.

The ventilation generally is of two kinds. First, natural—that is, that caused by the shrinking of the siding and flooring; and second, by dropping the windows—either of which I think is very bad in cold, winter weather. A very few school houses are ventilated through the ceiling.

Arithmetic, reading, geography, and grammar are the principal studies.

Children commence attending at the age of three, four, five, and six years, and generally leave school at eighteen or nineteen years of age. They are allowed to attend as long as they please. The general progress of the schools is moderate, and their most urgent want is ambition.

TEACHERS.—The proportion of male to female teachers during the year is as one to three. The proportion this winter will be about as four to nine. The wages of lady teachers for the past summer have been from \$1.25 to \$2.50 per week, and board around—average price \$1.75, I should think. This winter their wages are from \$3.50 to \$5.50 per week, and their board will cost them \$1.25 to \$1.50 a week. A Normal graduate, Mrs. S. C. Clark, of Phoenix, received \$28 per month last winter in Phoenix. She was principal of the Phoenix schools. Miss Ada L. Crawford,



of Parish, received \$27 for twenty days last summer at Oswego Falls. She is now teaching in Fulton.

The gentlemen teachers receive this winter from \$14 per month and board around to \$24 and be boarded at one place. I think the best teachers do not get paid enough. I think the teachers are best prepared to teach arithmetic. Their greatest failing is in not making what they undertake to teach practical. I subject them to rigid written examinations, and many of them think it is "tough."

I think that about one-eighth of the teachers have read "Holbrook's Normal." There is a great demand for teachers of high qualifications. The few Normal graduates employed have good success in schools, their influence is good, and there will be an increasing demand for their services.

ACADEMIES.—We have no academy in this commissioner district. I think the number of private schools has decreased with the year, and I intend to do my best to make their existence unnecessary.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES are in a sad condition. The books are not well taken care of, and many have been lost and destroyed. I do not think they are very generally read, and are not very highly estimated by the people. I have not examined the libraries.

Nearly every family has a few books, and newspapers are very generally read throughout the district. War news is the principal thing, and has been for the past year.

TRUSTEES.—I think that a majority of the people would prefer one trustee. More than one-half of the districts have adopted the plan, and many did it this fall. I do not know how many trustees have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.—The teachers' institute of this district was in session twenty-one days. W. G. Chaffee conducted the institute, and taught phonetics (and had an experimental class), phonography, advanced and common algebra, geography, grammar, and arithmetic the first week; Byron G. Clapp, Hastings Centre, practical arithmetic three weeks; Rosa H. Strickland, Hastings, advanced grammar two weeks; Orrin B. Patchin, Amboy, reading, elocution, and intellectual arithmetic; Amos J. Richardson, East Palermo, intellectual arithmetic; E. A. Fish, advanced grammar and reading. Subjects of instruction—Reading, practical and intellectual arithmetic, common and advanced algebra, grammar, geography, phonetics and phonography, and discussions every day. Lecturers—Rev. V. M. Wilson, Colosse, N. Y., "The Teacher—A Pilgrim;" Prof. C. M. Underhill, of Falley seminary, Fulton, N. Y., "The Symmetrical Man;" Rev. R. H. Pullman encouraged the teachers to do well their duty; W. G. Chaffee, "The Best Method of Teaching Children to Read" (phonetic.) Over one hundred teachers were in attendance. It was the best institute I ever attended. There was no "jar" during its

whole session. It was a perfect success, and the teachers were well satisfied with it.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—I visit schools, point out their faults, and tell the teacher how to remedy them; counsel with school officers; examine teachers; organize and conduct a teachers' institute, write letters, &c.

I have been experimenting with phonetics for the past year, and believe that a child can be taught by means of phonetics to read our common print in half the time it can by the word or alphabet systems. For that reason I advocate the system. A number of scholars who never attended school before last summer were able to read well in four months in Willson's Second Reader. It makes better readers, and in a much shorter time than any other system with which I am acquainted.

Respectfully your obedient servant,

W. G. CHAFFEE,

*School Commissioner.*

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### OTSEGO COUNTY—SECOND DISTRICT.

To the Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*:

Your circular calling for a special report has been received. I beg leave to submit the following:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—The attendance of scholars of legal age, residing in my district, is not as general as the interest of education demands; a variety of causes operate to prevent the attendance at our schools. In some districts local disaffection, in others the fear of rate-bills. A dislike to a teacher, remoteness from the school house; a vast number of causes of this character operate on the minds of parents and scholars, to prevent attendance on the schools to the extent and regularity desirable. In many districts the public money is not sufficient to pay the teacher; and many persons, either from pride or avarice, dislike to send where any expense is to be incurred. To be classed among the "indigent" is deemed, by many, far more disgraceful than to be classed with the ignorant. Hence, a rate-bill discourages in many instances attendance at the schools. I am, therefore, in favor of *free schools*, or an appropriation of money sufficient to secure all who desire the benefits of the common school free from the horror of a rate-bill.

SCHOOL HOUSES.—The school houses in my district are very poorly provided with those means of instruction which I deem essential to the advancement of pupils. In some I find no blackboards; in such cases I have called on the trustees, and urged the necessity of providing, at once, this useful aid to instruction. In but very few school houses have I found any charts and maps; and in many of the schools where I have found blackboards, I have found teachers, for weeks, conducting their schools without chalk. In all these instances I have used all the power

vested in me by the law, to remedy these evils. I have urged trustees to provide such maps as I considered necessary, and such charts as the interests of the pupils required. In some instances they have regarded my wishes; in most, however, they have not.

As to school buildings, the people are becoming sensible that an improvement is demanded. Wherever new ones are erected much effort is now made to render them commodious and comfortable; and great improvement is perceptible in the internal fixtures. The old slab benches, without backs, are disappearing, and soon, I trust, in my district, will be remembered only as things that were. Convenient desks, adapted to the wants of the scholars, are now deemed a necessary part in every new school house. Temperature in the school-room is an important item. Scholars and teachers alike suffer, unless the room in which their respective pursuits are conducted is kept at a suitable temperature for their comfort. He who pursues knowledge shivering with cold, will pursue it under difficulties which nothing but a good stove and well seasoned fuel can remove. In many districts the wood is cut green, and dragged to the school house for consumption. In such cases I have frequently found teachers and scholars huddled together over the stove in a cold winter's day; a condition of things which not only arrests study, but destroys the order of the school. I have known one instance of this kind, where the *melee* produced by the efforts of pupils to get near enough to the stove to keep warm, resulted in breaking up the school for a whole winter, besides kindling bitter and unpleasant feeling in the district, which years may not entirely heal.

I have to regret that the sites of most of our school houses are anything but desirable. The roadside, the angles of roads, and sometimes a part of the territory legally assigned to the highway itself, is fixed upon for the school house, often on a bank impossible to ascend with a team. No play ground, no shade trees, no fence except a crooked rail fence that terminates at the back corners of the school house, leaving the building to form part of the fence inclosing the adjoining lot from the highway. I know of but four school houses in my district that are inclosed by a good fence, and but one where any regard has been paid to render the surrounding grounds attractive by shade trees. There is no post to hitch a horse near any of our school houses; I have suggested to trustees the necessity of providing this convenience; in winter weather it is almost impossible to find a suitable place to fasten a horse when the commissioner visits the schools. Our school grounds are also very deficient in the necessary outbuildings. Some of them have no wood sheds, and in a few instances no privy. In all these cases, I have, when I could reach the trustees, endeavored to awaken them to the necessity of providing these necessary appendages of the school.

TEXT BOOKS.—As to the supply, it is sufficient in quantity, but as to quality I cannot report favorably. Text books of all kinds find their



way into our schools, and what is worse, parents will not hearken to any suggestions on this subject; they cling to old prejudices, and the evil is apparently incurable. In some schools, where not over a dozen scholars were studying arithmetic, I have found four or five different different text books on that branch; as a result, an entire want of classification, and the teacher's time frittered away, to the neglect of other branches. This difficulty exists, more or less, in the text books on all subjects. I am decidedly in favor of a uniformity of text books. Let it be recommended from high authority, and once adopted, and I think the door will be opened for a rapid improvement in our common schools. It will do more to economize the time of the teacher than any other one step that can be taken.

**STUDIES PURSUED.**—The branches of study pursued in the schools in my district are arithmetic, grammar, geography, writing, reading, and spelling. Mental arithmetic is taught in a large majority of the schools, and recommended by me in all; I prize it highly; it does more to sharpen the mind and prepare it for consecutive thought than any other study in the school. In a few of our schools declamation and composition are taught with a good deal of success. I have rather encouraged teachers to give some attention to these subjects, although in many instances parents object to their children spending any time on them. Politeness on the part of scholars is an important item; the success of men very much depends on their politeness, and I have labored with teachers to induce them to give some attention to this subject. I think I am meeting with some success. In some of the schools vocal music is taught; I wish it might be in all; it cultivates the emotional nature and refines and elevates the mind.

**THE PLAY GROUND.**—To every educator of youth the play ground is, or should be, an object of great interest. I do not think, as a general rule, that teachers or parents sufficiently estimate the influence of the play ground. It is my candid belief that much of the animosity and bitterness existing in districts between families arises from the influence of the school play ground, and might be arrested by a judicious management of the teacher. Here kindness and courtesy should be inculcated. I have frequently made this a subject of my remarks in the visitation of schools.

**WRITING.**—Writing, on the whole, is the most neglected branch in the common school. Teachers themselves are here very deficient. They seem to have no system of writing which they teach in their schools, and none by which they are guided themselves. I consider this a great evil. Every pupil who graduates in the common school should come out of it with a good handwriting. It alone is a passport to success in business life.

**TIME PUPILS ATTEND SCHOOL.**—As a general rule, there are few pupils who attend school in my district after they are eighteen years old.

Most young ladies close their education in the school-room as early as sixteen. It is hardly allowable, in this vicinity, that a young lady of marriageable age shall attend district school. Scholars commence attending school at almost all ages between four and fourteen; a large majority, however, from four to six years. My opinion is that children commence attending school too soon. Had I the management of the matter, I would fix the period of regular attendance at school from seven to ten, according to the constitution and disposition of the child.

TEACHERS.—Under this head I have to report that I have given during the year last past about three hundred certificates to teachers in my district—considerably more than half of them to females, and nearly all of them to persons who follow teaching as a temporary employment, looking to the future to open the way for a more lucrative and less laborious occupation. This feeling among our teachers I consider one fatal obstacle to the improvement of our schools. We need a permanent corps of teachers willing to separate themselves from all other pursuits, and to lay aside all ambition except the ambition to improve themselves in knowledge and in the power to impart it to others. For such a body of teachers the harvest is ripe, and with such a body the fruit would be gathered and stored up that should bring happiness and prosperity to future generations. Teachers do not teach in my district generally over five years, and a majority of them only a part of the year. In summer our schools are almost wholly taught by females. Their wages range from \$1 to \$2.50 per week. Till the present season the winter schools have been taught by males—wages from \$10 to \$30 per month. Owing to the present unhappy calamities of our common country, many of the schools this winter are under the care of females; and they are, so far as I have yet learned, giving very good satisfaction.

ATTENDANCE AT INSTITUTE.—Teachers in my district have neglected to attend the institute. The excuses assigned have been various; but mostly distance and expense. From some parts of my district it is forty miles to the county seat—the place where our institutes have been held. This year, by persistent effort, I induced one hundred and thirty of our teachers to attend the institute. I am of opinion that the institute should be divided in this county, and one held in each district. It would give the benefits arising from it to a great many teachers in my district who will not consent to attend at Cooperstown. I should be glad to learn your views on this subject, at your convenience.

TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS.—The first year I entered upon the duties of my office, I endeavored to organize and support a teachers' association in my district. I expended about \$40, had four or five meetings, and was obliged to abandon the project. The teachers at the institute proposed to try again, and a new association is to be organized in this district on the 17th of January. I shall do what I can to sustain it, though

I have but little faith in its success. I did not feel like encouraging the enterprise; at all events, when proposed at the institute, I thought it prudent to let teachers understand that its success and usefulness would depend more on their efforts and less on mine than they, in the past, seemed to expect. A commissioner can do much to sustain an association, but with little effect, unless teachers co-operate with him; while teachers having the right spirit can sustain an association unaided by the commissioner.

EXAMINATIONS OF TEACHERS.—My usual course is to take up each branch required to be taught in the common school, seeking, by my mode of questioning, to draw out from the applicant his knowledge of each branch precisely as it would be drawn out by a class of inquisitive scholars in the school-room. By this course I most thoroughly ascertain two things: first, the knowledge of the applicant; second, the ability of the applicant to impart that knowledge to young minds. I then make myself—before the class of teachers—a scholar seeking to have explained and illustrated to my undeveloped comprehension the knotty points and abstruse principles of each science, and each department of science, taught in the school; so that my examination of teachers is a miniature school-room. I am the class and the applicant the teacher. I then compel applicants not only to give me the rules by which processes are worked out, but what I deem more useful than rules, a clear explanation of the principles on which those rules are established—the reason of the process they perform. I then, in my examination, go over the subjects of arithmetic, grammar, geography—testing the capacity to teach as well as the knowledge of the applicant. I have sometimes required written compositions from teachers, and usually an exercise in reading. I also spend some time in the great domain of general knowledge—the history of nations (particularly of our own); the government of the prominent nations of the earth; wherein they resemble each other, and wherein they differ from each other; the effects of the political institutions on the general progress of the people; the social and religious institutions of the different nations, and their effects on the happiness and welfare of nations; the occupations of the different nations of the earth, and the effects of occupations on the minds and institutions of the people—all these subjects, and many more of a like character, are brought into and form a part of my examinations. With some classes I spend considerable time in this field of inquiry. It serves to stimulate the love of knowledge in teachers, and widens their range of thought and investigation.

MATHEMATICAL GEOGRAPHY.—I found this subject entirely neglected in my district. Teachers knew comparatively nothing of this branch two years ago. They seemed to think it did not properly come within the range of studies required to be taught in the common school. I found but three or four teachers in my district the first year of my official ex-



perience who could readily explain even the every-day phenomena occurring around them—such as the cause of day and night; the cause of the variation of the length of the days and nights; the causes of the variation of temperature; the motions of the earth, and effects of those motions on the surface of the earth. They knew the facts, but had no methods of explaining and illustrating them to the comprehension of young pupils. I have devoted a good deal of time, in examinations, to this subject; and I now think there are no teachers in the schools who are not able to make this whole subject (complex and difficult as it is for young minds to comprehend), clear to their pupils.

STATE AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.—On this subject I found teachers very deficient. I have drilled them thoroughly in this department, taking up town, county, and State officers; their duties, terms of office, and mode of election; distribution of the powers of government, and limits within which those powers are exercised; the divisions of the State with reference to the departments of State government—all these subjects, and many more of a like nature, I have made topics of examination and instruction to teachers, and I already perceive the good effects springing from my efforts in this direction. A teacher rarely now comes to me for examination without having first procured some good work on this subject, and thoroughly read it. I have recommended to teachers “Young’s Government Class Book.” The ladies, in many instances, combatted this course of examination; but I have persisted in it with both males and females, and they have finally yielded. The fair teachers now apparently excel the gentlemen in this department. They seem to relish political knowledge—the breaking away of legislative restraints is opening new visions to their ambition, and in this direction I have not dampened their hopes. If the effect shall ultimately lead to a better appreciation of the value of their labor, I shall not be disappointed.

ORTHOGRAPHY.—Great deficiency prevailed on this branch; an evil which, so far as my observation extends, prevails throughout the State. In my examinations I have given special attention to this subject. I have also made it a point in the visitation of schools, to see that scholars were properly instructed in this branch. I think now that at least half the schools in my district are able to sound the letters, and do sound them every day. This is a mighty stride in progress, for in my visitations of the first year of my office, I did not find one school where the letters could be correctly sounded. To trace the elementary sounds of the voice to their representative letters, to the syllable, to their combination in the word, is one of the most interesting exercises of the school-room, and is the key to unlock the mysteries and lay bare the beauties of our written language; and no scholar is prepared to enter the field of the classification of words and the formation of sentences, until he has made himself perfectly familiar with the original elements of those signs of ideas which must enter into combination in a perfect sentence.

On the whole, I find teachers best prepared to teach arithmetic, natural geography, etymology, syntax and prosody in grammar; in reading, orthography, mathematical geography, political geography, writing, teachers are mostly deficient, and to these branches I have directed the burthen of my examinations, giving to my classes such information on these subjects as I had at command, and endeavoring to stimulate them to active and energetic effort in the acquisition of more, and pointing out to them the sources where they might obtain more knowledge of these subjects. I have given second grade certificates, except in seven or eight instances, when I have given first grades. I cannot report the exact number of Normal school graduates in my district. The number is certainly small, and but four or five are engaged in teaching.

SCHOOL GOVERNMENT.—I find, as a general rule, that those who dispense with the use of the rod are most successful; I therefore, as far as possible, endeavor to have teachers get along without it. There are instances, however, when it must be resorted to.

TRUSTEES.—I think the general sentiment of the people is in favor of one trustee only. My opinion is, the one trustee system will ultimately prevail. The business falls upon one, when there are three, in most instances. There is a strong disposition on the part of trustees to employ low-priced teachers. The public mind is not yet open for a high grade of instructors; it is, however, gradually rising to a higher standard, and in some districts under my jurisdiction, the inquiry of trustees is not how low will he teach, but what are his qualifications? Such an instance exists in the district where I reside, under the supervision of a generous and intelligent officer. It has rapidly risen in four years to a height of prosperity which ranks it first in the county. The aspirants for knowledge are drawn towards it from surrounding towns, and its beneficent light is reflecting honor alike on those who conduct its affairs, and the people who unitedly contribute to its support.

ACADEMIES.—In my district there are three academies; number of students I cannot report. They are all well managed institutions. The teachers this fall examined by me from the teachers' class of the Gilbertsville academy, gave great credit to that institution, and showed that the Regents had not unwisely given it their confidence. The academy at Unadilla is in a flourishing condition, and Mr. Arnold, its gentlemanly principal, is rapidly rendering it a useful means for the improvement of teachers in that vicinity. I cannot at present give you the statistics of private schools in my district.

LIBRARIES.—The libraries are doing a good work. Their condition, however, is generally bad, the books worn and much soiled. They are not kept with the care they should be. In most districts additions are constantly being made to them. Histories, biographies and scientific works, compose a large proportion of the libraries. Some, however, have a majority of their reading matter in light literature and tales of

adventure. Few poetical works are found in the libraries. I am of the opinion that a few volumes of poetry, selected from the best English and American poets, would contribute much to elevate the tastes of our people. No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction, is not complied with by any of the trustees, to my knowledge. Most of them, keep a book in which they make memorandums of what they deem important, but they do not keep a record according to the provisions of that section.

I designed saying something on the subjects of health of scholars and school government, but I think this report is already as extended as you will require.

As to my own duties, I have visited 80 schools in my district the year last past, and given such advice in each as I thought pertinent to each particular school. The other duties by law attached to my office, I have in the main endeavored to fulfill. My district is large, and many schools difficult of access, and consequently the duties arduous. I cannot give my entire time to the visitation of schools. Two-thirds of it, however, the past year, has been devoted to the labor of my office. My expenses considerably exceed the amount audited by the board of supervisors. I shall, if required, devote another year to the office, and then most gladly retire to private life.

Yours, with respect,

H. R. WASHBON,

*School Commissioner.*

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## PUTNAM COUNTY.

The school commissioner for the county of Putnam, in compliance with the requirement of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, respectfully submits the following report for the year ending September 30th, 1862:

**DISTRICTS.**—The whole number of school districts having their school houses situated in said county, is sixty-one. No district has more than one house, and one is now destitute of any.

**SCHOOL HOUSES.**—Nineteen school houses are very good and substantial structures, with commodious play-grounds ornamented with pleasant shade trees. The remaining number are not of so attractive a mien, but still they are generally in quite good repair, and comfortable. Many of them, however, are in too close proximity to the highway, and destitute of any other play-ground.

**OUT-BUILDINGS.**—With few exceptions all have one, and but one, necessary out-building. Wood houses are entirely unknown.

**INTERNAL ARRANGEMENT.**—Their internal arrangement, with some exceptions, is very similar. Forty-six have long tables attached to the sides of the room, accommodated with long forms, and for the smaller



pupils two or three lower benches, with backs, occasionally placed near the centre of the room, and sometimes necessarily too near the hot stove for the comfort and health of their occupants, a matter too often lost to view in the multiplicity of cares devolving upon the teacher of a large school, and in a school house after the old ante-diluvian model.

Ten others are arranged with suitable desks, seats and aisles, and two or three with desks and seats around the sides of the room.

A few of our school houses yet have no entry room or hall, the outside door opening directly into the school room.

HOW WARMED AND VENTILATED.—The rooms in all the country places are warmed (and sometimes heated) by a wood stove placed near the centre of the room, and in a few of the villages by a coal stove. None by heated air. They are mostly ventilated by dropping the upper sashes of the windows. Some, however, have not adopted even this simple and cheap improvement for the health and comfort of the children.

SCHOOL APPARATUS.—Proportionally few of our school rooms are yet supplied with any school apparatus, except the blackboard. A small number have a terrestrial globe and outline maps, and a very few Holbrook's school apparatus.

TEXT-BOOKS.—The text-books now in use have not generally been selected by any uniform rule, but in accordance with the wishes of the child, parent and teacher. Consequently they comprise a great variety and in many schools present an almost insurmountable obstacle to any systematic classification. Those most prominent are Sanders' and Webster's Spellers, McGuffey's and Sanders' series of Readers, McNally's and Colton and Fitch's Geographies, Thomson's, Davies' and Greenleaf's Practical, and Stoddard's and Colburn's Intellectual Arithmetic, Brown's, Smith's and Clark's Grammars, and Davies' Elementary Algebra.

STUDIES.—The studies connected with these works, constitute nearly all the branches pursued in any of our district schools. Occasionally are found two or three pupils studying surveying, geometry, natural philosophy or the science of familiar things, but these cases are rare.

ATTENDANCE.—Most of the children in our county between the ages of five and sixteen years, are permitted to attend school during some portion of the year, but the attendance of a large proportion in many, alas, too many of our districts, is so irregular, that it is not only of little benefit to themselves, but a grievous nuisance to our schools, retarding their progress, destroying their classification, causing imperfect lessons, dissipating all anxiety to learn, distracting attention, making disorder and confusion, producing dissatisfaction to parents, sorrow and despair to teachers, and in some districts entirely discontinuing their schools.

This, I believe, is the very worst feature, or rather attendant of our school system. O! could there be found some remedy (statutory if need be) for this great evil, we might, with joy, soon welcome the day when

our district schools would take that exalted rank among social institutions to which they would be so justly entitled.

TEACHERS.—During the winter season about three-fifths of the teachers are males, and during the summer four-fifths are females. About twenty follow teaching as a permanent employment, and have taught five years or more. The remaining number consist of transient persons and residents, who teach a term or two, and for want of a suitable situation leave the county or the business for an uncertain period, and perhaps teach no more.

There are seven Normal teachers, four of whom are graduates that have taught at intervals seven or eight years, and have been generally very successful.

The prices of teachers vary surprisingly. Males receive from \$18 to \$50 per month; only two, however, obtain the latter price. The average price is not more than \$25. The wages of females are from \$10 to \$20 per month—estimating their board at \$1.25 per week, as many board with the patrons of the school.

EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.—The commissioner has followed the directions laid down in the Code as far as possible, without depriving some weak districts of a teacher entirely. A large majority of certificates granted are of the second and third grades.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—The number of private schools is constantly fluctuating from twenty to nearly thirty. Nearly all of them are in the villages, and at present their number is somewhat diminished. Last year their number was twenty-five. This year twenty-one.

LIBRARIES.—In quite too many instances the school district libraries are improperly appreciated. They were badly, or at least unhappily, selected in many districts, and are very little read and not well cared for. But I am glad to say this is not universally true. In large districts, especially, their selections are more various, and they are more frequently perused.

TRUSTEES.—I am astonished at the tardiness of some districts in availing themselves of the superior advantages of one instead of three trustees. A majority of them yet retains the old practice.

INSTITUTES.—An attempt was made, at one time, by Mr. Sherman, commissioner, to hold an institute conducted by Mr. Sanders, of New York city, which entirely failed of success through want of proper attendance. This failure seems to operate against me in convincing some of the teachers of the propriety and necessity of another, and in persuading them to attend. I hope, however, to be able to hold one successfully in the spring.

The labors of the commissioner consist in the visitation of schools, examination of teachers, altering and establishing the boundaries of districts, reconciling by counsel and direction parties at variance, urging upon trustees the importance of securing the services of the most able

teachers, and in various other ways striving to elevate the character and efficiency of our district schools.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

PETER B. CURRY,

*School Commissioner.*

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## QUEENS COUNTY—SECOND DISTRICT.

HEMPSTEAD, December 30, 1862.

Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Sup't Public Instruction* :

Sir—In compliance with the requirements contained in your circular addressed to commissioners, dated the 27th day of August, 1862, I make the following brief report:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—The attendance, during some portion of the year, in this district, of persons of school age, is about one-fourth of the number of school age. The average constant attendance of said persons is about one-sixth. Rate-bills retard attendance. Public sentiment in regard to rate-bills is much the same as it has been for a number of years back. There are some communities, especially in the western end of the county, near the city of New York, where union and free schools are looked upon favorably. The provisions made for instructing pupils are very fair. The school houses are generally comfortable and commodious. Great improvement has taken place in regard to them in this county during the past six years. Sufficient attention has not been paid to sites and outhouses. The manner of warming school houses in the rural districts is much as it was twenty years ago; but in villages, stoves and heaters are both used. A slight improvement has been made in ventilation. Globes are to be found in many of the schools, but are seldom used by the teachers, judging from their position, and the dust that is often apparent upon them. A decided improvement has taken place in text books. The branches of study most generally pursued are the common English branches, with occasionally algebra, surveying, philosophy and chemistry. Pupils generally commence their attendance upon school at the age of six years, and end the same at about fourteen. They attend school from six to eight years. The schools are progressive; their most urgent wants are enlightened and generous trustees, who will employ the teacher with a view to his qualifications, and not to his cheapness.

TEACHERS.—The proportion of female to male teachers is as one to ten; and of those who follow teaching as a permanent employment to those who follow it temporarily, is as five to ten, or one-half. Temporary teachers devote from three to six months in the year; others teach from two to ten years. Wages in summer and winter do not vary much.



Females receive about \$60 per quarter of twelve weeks, and board themselves; males from \$80 to \$100. This is in the rural or farming districts. The attendance of teachers upon the county institutes has been, until the past two years, very slim, and quite discouraging to the commissioners. This has been, in a measure, owing to the influx of teachers from the eastern States, principally from Connecticut, who seldom cared for anything but taking their salary. But little interest has been manifested in associations, although a county association has had a lingering existence for the last eight years. Teachers with whose qualifications I am unacquainted, I subject to scrutinizing examination of from two to three hours. Few teachers have a good acquaintance with any other branches than the plain elementary English branches. Not more than one in ten have studied any work on the theory and practice of teaching, or the science and art of teaching. I grant about sixty certificates per year. Of this number, about one-tenth are of the first grade; one-third of the remainder receive a second grade; and the balance third grade. There is only one or two Normal school graduates teaching in this district; the demand for the services of such is not great. First grade certificates I grant for only one year.

ACADEMIES.—There are two academies in this district, one at Jamaica, and one at Hempstead, neither of which has any teachers' class. Of the details of the management, &c., of the academies, I have no knowledge.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—There are 39 private schools in this district. The number of such is decreasing. The number of pupils in attendance on them is 871.

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.—There is but one of such to my knowledge, and that is a German Catholic school, at Winfield, in the town of Newtown.

COLORED SCHOOLS, or schools for colored children. There are three of such, to wit: in the village of Jamaica, in which 50 pupils are instructed; in the village of Newtown, in which there are but 20 pupils instructed; and at a place called Jerusalem, in the town of Hempstead, in which 20 pupils are instructed. The provision for the support of said schools is of the most meagre kind, except in the village of Jamaica. The colored school at Jerusalem receives a slight support from the society of Friends.

UNION FREE SCHOOLS.—There are five of such in Newtown, besides the free incorporated district in Astoria village. Jamaica has only one free school, and that is the incorporated one in the village of Jamaica. Hempstead has none.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—The condition of the district school libraries is anything but encouraging. I have reason to believe that the library money in many instances is appropriated to other purposes. Some trustees make no report of its expenditure. The books composing said libraries consist too frequently of light reading of a fictitious nature. There is hardly a library but has more or less books of a sectarian and

pernicious character. As a general thing the books are held in but slight estimation.

PRIVATE LIBRARIES, PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS.—Not more than one family in one hundred is supplied with what might justly be styled a private library. About one-half of the families take some periodical. Since the rebellion began, almost every family takes a daily newspaper, in addition to the weekly local one. The effect is to lessen the demand for library books.

TRUSTEES.—The sentiment of the people differs as to which is preferable, one or three. It is, however, generally conceded that one is preferable. There are not more than three districts, out of forty in my district, which have one trustee. The proportion of trustees (boards) who have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction is as two to four.

TEACHER'S INSTITUTES.—The seventh annual teachers' institute in this county was held in the village of Hempstead, in this district, commencing November 10th, 1862, and continuing in session for eleven days. Thomas Robinson, Commissioner of Wayne county, N. Y., acted as conductor the first week, assisted by Commissioners Clark and Downing. Prof. Clark, author of "Clark's Grammar," acted as conductor the second week, assisted by the same and Professor Stoddard. Instruction was given in reading, writing, arithmetic, algebra, elocution, spelling and calisthenics. Lectures were delivered by Rev. J. J. Morgan, subject: "Are there more worlds than one?" Nelson G. Gates, of Flushing, subject: "Astronomy;" Emerson W. Keyes, Dep. Supt. Public Instruction, subject: "Progress of Education;" F. W. Ricord, State Supt. Public Instruction, New Jersey, subject: "General and Comprehensive;" Charles Davies, LL. D., of New York city, (Columbia College); M. L. Scudder, of Hempstead, subject: "The Trials of the Teacher;" David B. Scott, of New York city; Prof. Stoddard, of New York city. The number of teachers in attendance was 80. The public manifested great interest in the exercises, both daily and evening.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—The commissioner of this district endeavors to inspect the schools in his district three times a year. In addition to this his presence is frequently required at distant points in his district to attend to some matter, or to be present at some school examination or exhibition. In addition to making out reports, &c., a large amount of office business is done in giving advice to trustees, supplying them with teachers, and the examination of teachers. The columns of the weekly local papers are made a medium of communicating notices to trustees, and of publishing the district apportionment, which is done at the expense of the commissioner, the supervisors having refused to allow the printers therefor. Notwithstanding the ample and timely notice given trustees in regard to the manner and time of making their annual reports, four boards of trustees neglected filing their report with the

town clerk until the 20th of December, 1862, and then they were written to and furnished with blank reports by the commissioner before making their return, thus delaying the commissioner in transmitting his abstracts from said reports to the Department of Public Instruction until the 22d day of December, in the year 1862.

From the acquaintance which I have had with the common schools of Queens county for the past twenty years, I am satisfied that they will fail to accomplish, fully, the end for which they were instituted, until the said schools are free in every respect. When that time arrives, a better class of teachers, as a body, will be employed, and the educational machinery of the great State of New York will move gracefully, and without jar or friction, and the foundation will be securely and permanently laid for the enlightenment and prosperity of the future population of the Empire State.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

DANIEL CLARK,

*School Commissioner.*

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### RENSSELAER COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

To the Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

Sir—Upon almost any other topic than that of Public Education I could with pride report my assembly district—as its devotion to the Union; its generous, self-denying patriotism; its well tilled and fertile acres; its extensive and prosperous manufactories; the generous hospitality and moral worth of its inhabitants—but upon the topic more especially confided to me I cannot speak as I would wish, nor as the importance of the subject demands.

While the spirit of progress has made itself felt in the mechanical and agricultural interests, in the matter of public education there is a decided leaning to what at the present day is called conservatism. And yet, I am happy to say, that during the past two years our schools *have* improved from fifty to one hundred per cent., and this is so because public attention is aroused. Teachers are elevating themselves and their profession; school houses and grounds are more cared for, and teachers of standing and reputation sought for.

SCHOOLS.—The results as yet may not be very marked, but these signs indicate a “rising tide.” Schools from which I turned in disgust during my first visitation, I now point to with pride; and teachers who kept their blackboards in the wood-house, and thought outline maps very pretty window curtains, are zealously and effectively acquiring the use of these valuable auxiliaries.

About 73 per cent. of all the persons of school age attended school either public or private during some portion of the past year; about 64



per cent. of these attended the public; and when it is considered that very few under five or over sixteen years of age attend school, it will be seen that the inhabitants were well represented at the school house.

Out of 91 districts, 2 only are under free school acts; but 15 others issued no rate-bills, thus being practically free. It is fair to presume, that in sparsely settled districts, where the farmers are rich and without children, the rate-bill system is popular; while in those more populous special legislation will ere long be invoked to render their schools free.

There are 93 school houses—40 very good, 41 fair, 12 horrible, where the floors are broken through, and the children cluster in corners during rain storms, and shiver as the wintry blast whistles through. Only 69 are furnished with privies. Conditions in this respect, in a populous and wealthy district, which may not be named “to ears polite” are now happily removed, and it is only just to say, that under the stern and merited rebuke of Mr. Deputy Supt. Keyes, to whose efforts the improvements in this assembly district are in a great measure due, a new and commodious house is building, soon to be occupied by a graded school.

My district being mainly an agricultural one, there is no lack of playground, and it is rare to see a school house lot surrounded with a fence, unless some careful farmer has fenced it out from his grain field. With two exceptions, there have been no attempts at ornamentation, either within or without the school house; and one of these deserves honorable mention, from the fact that the liberal-minded trustees concluded to paint the house at their own expense, but as they could not agree upon the choice of color, each selected a side and painted thereon his own chosen shade. Unfortunately there were four sides to the house, and but three trustees, so the fourth side remains *in puris naturalibus*, whereon some future official may distinguish himself. As may be supposed, the present appearance of the building is unique.

Paint being a taxed article, is scarce, while mats and scrapers are still more rare; floors answer for spittoons, and they are well used by teachers and pupils; furniture rude and sadly cut up; there is a very general supply of blackboards and Webster’s unabridged dictionary. About one-half of the school houses are furnished with outline maps, and during the past summer quite a number of astronomical charts were purchased.

Three schools are supplied with globes, and one with a fine chemical and philosophical apparatus. Stoves for burning wood are universal, and ventilation is complete, though unpatented; the upper sash of each window is arranged so as to drop when necessary. There is no uniformity of text-books, nearly every new teacher causing a change.

The studies pursued are reading, spelling, geography, grammar and arithmetic; in a few instances algebra is added, and in one school the course is academic, with the exception of the languages; this is the only one where drawing and book-keeping are taught.

On the average, school is kept about seven months in each year; this is divided into a winter term of four and a summer term of three months. Pupils enter generally at five and leave at sixteen years of age; some few attend much longer. During the first three seasons they attend only the summer term, after this both terms; finally, as their services are required on the farm during the summer, they attend only the winter term.

Many young men and women go off to boarding school and are not counted in this Assembly district as attending school. In villages the children attend school the year round. Many of the districts are too small or feeble to accomplish much, and the school will soon close for the want of pupils to maintain it; distance prevents consolidation.

What is most needed at present, is a deeper interest on the part of the patrons of our schools. When this comes there will come with it,

1st. A uniform system of text-books established by the trustees, and maintained against all comers;

2d. Some simple, cheap apparatus for illustrating elementary principles, including slates, one for each child in the school;

3d and last. Teachers, each with the true spirit, and so well versed in the branches to be taught, and with such right use of language that they can present truth clearly and forcibly to their pupils.

TEACHERS.—There are two female to one male teacher in my district. They are usually the sons and daughters of farmers living in the district, and undergraduates of colleges and higher English schools. There are no permanent teachers outside of Lansingburgh. They are, as a general thing, conscientious in the discharge of their duty, but as their employment is temporary, they have no particular interest in the work. The teachers are zealous, and for the most part quite effective, but they lack that professional skill which experience and training can alone give.

It is extremely difficult to get them out of the beaten track in teaching any particular branch; they see and hear when improved and approved methods are presented, but they stand shivering while the current of progress is flowing by, afraid to plunge in, lest its waters are chilled by the icy breath of public opinion. There is no stated period of teaching, it may be one or ten years.

Wages are from \$5 to \$16 per month, in summer, and from \$16 to \$30 in the winter. In my examinations I require candidates to perform imaginary journeys from place to place, to test them in geography; to correct and parse exercises in false syntax; to solve and demonstrate problems in arithmetic, and to write from dictation, in order to test them in spelling, penmanship and punctuation.

The order of proficiency is, 1st, arithmetic; 2d, spelling; 3d, penmanship; 4th, geography; 5th, grammar, and 6th and almost nothing, a knowledge of the sounds, powers and divisions of the alphabet. Scarcely one who has looked into a work on teaching, or attended an institute

beyond those I have established in the different towns. Second grade certificates are most frequently given.

Each district hopes to secure a first-class teacher at a third class price. There are no Normal graduates or undergraduates teaching in this district.

ACADEMIES.—There is but one academy in this assembly district. The building, furniture, library, and apparatus are rather superior, and the studies pursued are the same as in institutions of like grade in other places. The pupils are about 40 in number from primary to those more advanced. Tuition from \$4 to \$8 per quarter, and the teacher receives the whole of it. Besides this he receives from \$60 to \$80 per annum from the Regents of the University. I am at a loss to know how the male teachers of this county are to receive any practical benefit from the institution selected by the Regents for the education of common school teachers. High, and deservedly so, I make no doubt, but Mrs. Willard's seminary is for young ladies exclusively. What we need is an institution where young men may be fitted for teaching common schools.

There are 25 private schools in this assembly district, with an enrollment of 603 pupils. This is about the same as in former years.

There are no parochial schools.

There is a department for the instruction of colored children attached to public school No. 1, Lansingburgh. This is supported as are the other departments. There are 25 pupils, having the same advantages as the white children.

There are no union schools in this district.

LIBRARIES.—In the matter of libraries there is much to be said—more than could be said in this report. It is sufficient to remark that there is great wrong somewhere; in other words there is great expenditure for nothing. The books are in good condition, and this is no recommendation; I would prefer to see them more worn from liberal use. The selections are excellent for matured minds, but not adapted to the wants of the young. Our country libraries are doing no good; the books are not read, and trustees and people are alike dissatisfied, seeking how to appropriate the money to other uses.

PRIVATE LIBRARIES, &c.—There is not much reading done in the country districts; each family has a few books of a mixed character, mainly religious, and a few take weekly newspapers. At the railroad stations a few dailies are sold. This is about the extent of the matter.

TRUSTEES.—About one-third of the districts elect but one trustee; the others choose three, but it is seldom that more than two act. About one in ten of the districts have the necessary blank books. Teachers' lists are kept on loose sheets of paper.

INSTITUTES.—When I entered upon the duties of commissioner I could not induce teachers to consent to attend a county or district institute, so universal was the apathy. I therefore concluded to try weekly town



institutes. These have been continued for nearly two years with marked and increasing success.

They have been conducted as such meetings usually are, and in some of the towns the inhabitants attend in large numbers. Another season I shall venture upon a district institute.

COMMISSIONER.—During the past year I have lectured 66 times upon education and teaching; examined and licensed 110 teachers; made 190 school visitations; attended fifty teachers' meetings; held four meetings of inhabitants on the subject of consolidating districts, and settled satisfactorily a large number of local and general controversies. Besides this I have done a fair office business—answering questions, deciding points of law, and writing letters. I have traveled by private and public conveyance over 6000 miles all within my district.

There may be commissioners who have labored more intelligently, more laboriously, more successfully than I, but conscience whispers that none have worked with purer motives or more devotion. I have the satisfaction of knowing that I have never missed an appointment or disappointed an audience.

Very respectfully,

JAS. C. COMSTOCK,

Nov. 10, 1862.

*School Commissioner.*

## RICHMOND COUNTY.

To Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*:

Sir—Owing to the limited time that I have been connected with the schools, I cannot give you as full an account of their progress as I could wish.

I have the pleasure, however, to inform you, that notwithstanding the distracted state of the country, there is a fair increase in the number of children attending our common schools during the past year.

The average time that schools were taught during the year, was nine months, somewhat less than the average last year.

The whole number of children reported as—

Attending school, is.....	4,168
For the year previous .....	3,961
Whole number residing in county.....	9,390
Whole number previous year.....	9,287

EFFECT OF THE RATE-BILLS ON ATTENDANCE, AND PUBLIC SENTIMENT IN REGARD TO THEM.—I think that the public sentiment is decidedly opposed to the rate-bill system. My own experience has fully satisfied me of the superiority of our free schools. The rate-bill system has been abolished in the district in which I reside, for nearly ten years. Prior to the adoption of the present system, it was with the greatest difficulty that

money sufficient could be raised to support a single teacher at \$400 per annum.

Upon inquiry, I learn that when the school was taught under the old plan, that the number of persons within the school age—

In the district, was.....	500
Whole number registered .....	103
Average daily attendance.....	40

The above statement shows that under the rate-bill system, about one in five attended the school, while at present, under the new system, more than sixth-sevenths of the number of pupils in the district attend the school.

Since the adoption of the new system, the increase in the number of pupils in the district has been about 200, while the increase in the attendance has been about 550. From the above statement of facts, and other circumstances which have come under my observation, I think there can be no doubt as to the superiority of the new system.

Under the rate-bill system, the people were content with a dilapidated old school house, dilapidated old furniture, and still more dilapidated old teachers, who were content to receive a dilapidated salary in payment for their dilapidated services, in permitting the children under their charge to grow up as mentally dilapidated and poverty stricken as their several surroundings.

The change under the new system in the district, is most gratifying. A fine brick edifice, divided into three commodious departments, has been erected, and thoroughly furnished with all the modern improvements; clocks, blackboards, globes, maps, &c.

There are at the present time six well qualified, efficient teachers employed, and liberally paid.

The satisfactory, mental, moral and physical development of the children, under their several charges, are the best evidences that the teachers are thoroughly imbued with the great responsibility of their profession, and an ardent desire for the thorough discipline, rapid improvement and lasting happiness of their pupils.

**THE KIND AND SUPPLY OF TEXT-BOOKS.**—Some of the schools in the district are liberally supplied with the most popular text-books, such as McGuffey's and Sanders' Readers, Thomson's and Greenleaf's Practical and Stoddard's Mental Arithmetic, Brown's and Smith's Grammar; others again have every variety, and serious complaints are made on that score by some of the teachers—for it is impossible to classify the children properly, when their books differ so materially as many of them do.

The branches of study most generally pursued, are the ordinary English branches.

The ages at which pupils commence attending, varies from four to eight years; their attendance is irregular, and ends generally from the twelfth to the fifteenth year.

A large proportion of the teachers are males, who follow teaching as a permanent employment, teaching from six to nine months during the year; their salaries varying from \$200 to \$500 per annum.

I have been unable to organize a teachers' institute as yet, but shall make strenuous efforts to do so during the winter.

There was formerly in this district a teachers' association, holding monthly meetings; but they were never well attended, and the association ceased to meet a short time previous to my appointment.

I. LEA, *School Commissioner.*

STAPLETON, November 17, 1862.

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## ROCKLAND COUNTY.

Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

In a circular addressed to school commissioners, dated Aug. 27, 1862, you very judiciously called their attention to, and required from them, in addition to the abstracts of the reports of the trustees, a written report on public instruction within their official jurisdiction.

In consequence of a severe affliction, (our very worthy school commissioner having been prostrated by a stroke of paralysis some two months ago, and still unable to attend to his duties) this report has not been made. At his request, I have collected what the little time and scanty opportunities I have had, could well afford me, and although meagre it must suffice for a compliance with the instructions.

The subject of primary education is one of vast importance to a nation that has a popular form of government. Where the governed and those who govern are equals, where those who are governed make the laws by which they are governed, and the governors are but their representatives, how important it is that the elementary training of such a people should be of such a character as to bring out the highest intelligence, overshadowed and guided by a high moral sensibility. The efforts which had been made in that direction by the great Empire State, are indeed deserving of high credit. The effect of these efforts seems to have been to a certain extent spasmodic. At times we have seen the people greatly excited in regard to the subject of common schools, their principal topic of conversation being how they could best advance their welfare; and then again a lukewarmness and an almost total indifference, a seeming forgetfulness that we had such a place where we daily send our children to have their characters formed for usefulness not only as citizens of the State, but for personal enjoyment and as a source of comfort to their parents and friends. We have witnessed these alterations, and I would briefly refer to one of their most serious effects. Whenever we have seen this interest in the school subsiding, we have at the same time witnessed, as a natural consequence, a little more formal compliance with their duties on the part of school officers; those



who had the duty of examining teachers, not quite so exacting, a little lax and formal in their visitations to the schools, and consequently a creeping in sometimes of incompetent teachers, such as were sometimes morally, sometimes intellectually, and sometimes wholly deficient in every respect. This is an evil against which we ought most sacredly to guard. Who would commit the temporal not only, but the eternal welfare of a beloved child, to a man of base passions, infidel in sentiment, and destitute of that moral virtue, that would exclude him from the society of the most chaste and fastidious? Again how can a teacher be expected to impart knowledge of any subject, when he is ignorant of it himself? and further how very important the qualification in a teacher that he possess the faculty of imparting intelligibly that knowledge to his scholars? "As is the teacher, so is the school," is an old maxim to which it would be well that we gave more heed.

In regard to the general condition of the schools in Rockland county, according to the representation of our commissioner, (who has held the office about five years) there is a gradual advancement, and I have no doubt that they will compare favorably, as a whole, with those of any part of the State with like facilities.

According to the abstract of the reports of trustees, it appears that about one-half of the number of those who are reported as between the ages of 4 and 21, have attended the district schools during the last year. A number equal to about one-eighth of that in attendance at the district schools, as would appear from the abstract, attended private or select schools in the county, during the last year, showing an increase in the number attending that class of schools. This number is indeed larger in comparison than would appear from the tabular reports of the trustees, because they only give the average attendance of pupils at those private schools, whereas every child who may have attended perchance only one day during the year is counted in making up the number who have attended the district school. I am at a loss to what cause properly, to attribute this fact, in consequence of my limited acquaintance at the present time with our schools. It is a subject to which they who have the supervision of our common schools, should give some attention.

There is one school for colored children in this county, located in the town of Haverstraw; but the number of pupils, and its means of support, I have been unable to ascertain.

There is one free school in Nyack, in the town of Orangetown, organized under the law of 1853, which has, so far, I am informed, been a decided success.

From the tabular report, it appears that the whole number of teachers that have been employed in the district schools of this county, during the year, was 79, of which number 52 were males, and 27 females. There are 40 organized school districts in this county, from which reports were received. Here we have no succession of summer and winter schools, taught alternately by male and female teachers. Our schools

are taught continuously during the year, principally by males. The females included in the reports are, with few exceptions, employed as assistants. Males are receiving as wages, for terms of twelve weeks each, from \$80 to \$100; females, when they have charge of the school, from \$60 to \$80 for the same length of time.

A teachers' educational society was organized in this county about three years ago. Our school commissioner, in his annual address before the association, a little more than a year ago, remarked: "We have reached the close of the second year of the educational association, and it is yet alive. I look upon it as a matter of encouragement. Several times have the teachers of our county organized themselves into an association, and for a short time seemed successful. But, if my memory is not at fault, none of our former associations outlived two years. Hence we have cause to congratulate ourselves, not only that we are yet alive, but that we have a good prospect of future existence." In the same address, after alluding to the benefits to be derived by teachers at these meetings, he complained of their non-attendance, that so few ever appeared, and of that small number a still smaller proportion were punctual in their attendance. I am informed that there is now a growing interest among the teachers in the success of the educational association, and a consequent desire to arrive at a higher point of proficiency, not only, but efficiency, in the great work in which they are engaged. There seems to be a demand for teachers of a higher grade. Hence the stimulus to higher attainments on the part of teachers. About one to ten of the teachers employed in this county are Normal graduates or undergraduates.

A teachers' institute was held in the month of August last, at Nyack, which proved very satisfactory to the commissioner and those more immediately interested. It was continued for ten days, and was attended by about forty teachers. Much interest was manifested in the exercises by the people in the vicinity. Lectures and instruction were given by Profs. Calkins, Stoddard and Packard, of New York, Prof. Reid, of Newburgh, and Prof. Deuel, of New Jersey. The exercises were highly interesting and profitable, and well deserving the most devoted attention of all teachers.

The books in our district school libraries are not so much read as formerly. This is, perhaps, principally owing to the unfortunate condition of our country, the great anxiety to read the news of the day, and the absorbing interest which is manifested by the people in the great struggle through which, as a nation, we are passing. In some districts, the books in the library are seldom, if ever, read. In others, again, many families are seldom, if ever, without one or more books in their possession to read.

Here we see one of the beneficent efforts of the State to promote education and the spread of intelligence; here is a fountain to which old and young may come; from hence the farmer, the mechanic, and the

laboring man may, after the labors of the day are ended, take draughts of intellectual pleasure, which operate as an opiate to the weariness of the toils of the day, and make him feel that he has something more than mere animal passions to be gratified, that lift him up to his proper position, and point out to him why all created things are made subservient to him. Alas ! how strange that such proffered benefits should be so overlooked. Would it not be thought strange if, a man being appointed in every district to distribute the small sum of twenty-five cents per week to any of the inhabitants of the district who would make application for the same, they would not come to receive it? And shall the improvement, the enriching of the mind, that immortal part of our nature, be esteemed as less worthy of our care? And yet this, lamentably, is too true in a majority of our school districts. What a responsible duty is resting upon those to whom is committed the training of the present rising generation that they may grow up with their intellect so cultivated, their morals so happily formed and guided, that they may not only appreciate, but maintain in its original grandeur, (if not overturned before the sacred duty shall devolve upon them,) this glorious framework of our government, as it came into our hands from our fathers, should be the anxious desire of every christian patriot; and although it seems now to be in the very death-struggle for its existence, let us hope that a just God will so over-rule in the events of His providence that we may yet transmit it unimpaired and unbroken to our children; that with this sore chastisement he will send conviction to the minds of any and all who may have caused this sore judgment, of their error, and cause the same brotherly feelings to unite us as in years gone by.

N. C. BLAUVELT, in behalf of  
SIMON D. DEMAREST,

*School Commissioner.*

SPRING VALLEY, *January 18, 1863.*

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## ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

To the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction :*

Dear Sir—In compliance with your request, I herewith submit to you, in addition to the usual report, a brief statement in regard to the schools under my supervision.

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS.—In the eleven towns comprising the First Assembly district, exclusive of the village of Ogdensburgh, there are one hundred and fifty (150) school districts, in two of which no school has been kept within the last school year. One of the latter will doubtless be annulled, leaving one hundred and forty-nine (149) from which to expect reports the ensuing year.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.—In the above number of districts there have been kept one hundred and fifty-two (152) schools, two of which have failed



to employ, at the same time for six months, between October, 1861, and September 30th, 1862, qualified teachers, as required by law.

**Feeble Districts.**—In regard to school districts, quite a number are too small, having been divided and subdivided until they are weak, both in taxable property and children of school age. It is to be regretted that any should be found so unmindful of their true interests. In such schools I usually find employed teachers of the lowest grade, a very limited attendance of pupils, and both teacher and pupil destitute of that interest which warrants success. There is a growing sentiment, however, in such districts in favor of consolidation, and the time, I trust, is not distant when much can be done in this direction to increase the efficiency of such schools. Yet to attempt it *now* would serve but to awaken bitter strife and opposition.

**Irregularity of Attendance.**—Irregularity of attendance, I do not hesitate to say, is the most serious hindrance to the prosperity of our schools.

Taking the three largest and most populous towns in the district, viz: De Kalb, Gouverneur and Oswegatchie, based upon statistics gathered in the months of May, June and July of the year 1861, I find the following exhibit of registry and attendance:

Towns.	Number of schools.	No. of children of school age.	No. of pupils registered.	Average attendance.
De Kalb.....	21	1,229	811	507
Gouverneur .....	19	1,241	873	599
Oswegatchie .....	24	1,371	962	621

You will observe that about two-thirds of the number of children of school age are registered, while the average attendance is about two-thirds of the number registered. The leading cause of this limited attendance is no doubt fear of the "*enormous rate-bill*," while much may be safely attributed to the sole neglect of parents.

**Rate-Bills.**—That our present rate-bill system offers a premium for non-attendance, is sufficient evidence of its pernicious effects. The true friends of our schools would rejoice to see the system either entirely abolished, based upon the *average attendance*, or in some *other* way modified, with the view of stimulating attendance.

**School Houses.**—With a few *glaring exceptions*, the condition of school houses is very good. There have been quite a number built within the last few years which, in beauty, comfort and arrangement, are a credit to the intelligence and taste of the inhabitants of the districts in which they are located. Yet in out-buildings, school apparatus, ventilation, ornamenting play-grounds and the like, there is still a vast field for future enterprise.

**Branches of Study Pursued.**—The branches of study pursued are arithmetic, both mental and written, algebra, geometry, in a few instances, civil government, geography, English grammar, philosophy, reading, spelling and writing.

Seeing the importance of more thorough instruction in reading and spelling, much attention has been given to them within the last two years, and, I am pleased to say, with gratifying results.

TEXT BOOKS.—Davies' series of Mathematics and Parker and Watson's series of Readers will doubtless soon come into general use, having been uniformly recommended by our county teachers' association.

AGE OF PUPILS.—Pupils usually begin school at the age of five years, and end at the age of sixteen.

TEACHERS, THEIR COMPENSATION, &c.—Of the teachers employed, by far the greater proportion are *females*, constituting nearly three-quarters of the whole number.

Of the number who follow teaching as a permanent calling, a safe estimate would be one-third of the whole number employed, while these are, with but very few exceptions, females.

COMPENSATION.—The average compensation of female teachers in summer, is about \$7 per month; while in winter it is about \$10 per month. Male teachers are not employed in summer to any extent; their average compensation in winter is about \$19 per month.

EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.—The examination of teachers is partly oral and partly written. They are required to be familiar with the sounds of the oral elements, the analysis of the English language, arithmetic, both mental and written, algebra in a few particular cases, geography, writing, civil government, reading, spelling, and general intelligence. Particular importance has been given to reading and spelling. I usually find male teachers best qualified in mathematics, while females are uniformly the best readers and spellers.

NUMBER OF APPLICANTS LICENSED AND GRADE OF LICENSE.—At my examinations for the past year there has been—

	Applicants.	Licensed.	1st Grade.	2d.	3d.	Refused.
Spring.....	223	133	2	55	76	90
Fall.....	129	120	5	67	48	9
Total.....	352	253	7	122	124	99

Many of those examined in the spring were again examined in the fall, which accounts for the number of applicants. A large number of the teachers are licensed but for six months, thus requiring their attendance upon the "examinations" twice a year—believing them to be beneficial, and I am enabled thus better to judge of their proficiency.

Over fifty per cent. of those licensed have read some work on the "Theory and Practice of Teaching."

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—In 1861 there were 12 private schools, with an aggregate attendance of 343 pupils; while in 1862 there were but 6 such schools, with an attendance of 151 pupils; decrease, one-half. In proportion as our common schools become more efficient will private schools disappear.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—I have been unable to ascertain, with any degree

of accuracy, the real condition of school libraries; but from the manifest indifference in regard to them, I conclude it is not flattering. The books composing them, in many cases I regret to say, are not of that character best calculated to impart to the youthful mind very valuable information. The money apportioned for such purposes, is in almost every case, where the law allows, appropriated for teachers wages.

If books for our libraries could be selected by some competent authority, and the library *securely* placed in every school house, under the charge of the teacher, who should always strive to awaken in his pupils a desire to peruse them, a desire for useful reading might be implanted in the mind of the rising generation, which would be a valuable security against the "depraved taste" so ruinous to the present.

NEWSPAPERS.—They are almost universally taken and read.

TRUSTEES.—Of the number of school districts, about two-fifths choose but *one* trustee. There seems to be an increasing sentiment in favor of *one*.

TRUSTEES' REPORTS.—The negligence or *ignorance* in the preparation of these reports is glaringly apparent. In many cases they are not made out in season, or, if so made out, are not deposited in the town clerk's office; while many are incorrect in almost every particular. The commissioner is often compelled to "force balances," or return for correction, with a slight prospect of having it bettered.

If trustees were in a measure compensated for their labor, which is justly their due, I have no doubt the Department would receive more accurate information as to the real condition and wants of our schools.

Many have not "complied with the requirements of No. 116, of the Code of Public Instruction."

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.—The teachers' institute, held in October last, was acknowledged to be the most successful and profitable one ever held in the county. The attendance was large, and the deep interest awakened will, I trust, be powerful for good.

The commissioners were assisted by Prof. Winslow, of Watertown, Prof. Ellis, of Cazenovia, and Prof. Watson, of New York.

The reading exercises were conducted by Commissioners Laughlin and Bloss, and Prof. Winslow of Watertown.

The exercises in grammar were conducted by Prof. Roe, Principal of the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary, in a very able and satisfactory manner.

Prof. Watson gave lessons in phonics and calisthenics.

Prof. Ellis conducted the exercises in mathematics.

LECTURES, &c.—Prof. Watson gave an address on the subject of "Elocution." Prof. Lee, of St. Lawrence University, lectured upon the subject of "Language." Prof. Young, of Lawrenceville Academy, gave a lecture—subject, "Methods of Teaching." Rev. L. Merrill Miller, of Ogdensburgh, gave a lecture—subject, "The great Teacher, John Milton." Hon. Emerson W. Keyes, Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction, gave



an address—subject, ‘Being Taught by our Surroundings.’ Rev. E. W. Plumb, D. D., of St. Lawrence Academy, delivered a lecture upon the ‘Errors of Teaching.’

PRESENT PROSPECTS.—At no time since the commencement of my official duties, have our schools opened with more encouraging prospects than the present. Our teachers seem to have gained new strength and vigor, and they manifest a settled determination to fully qualify themselves for their work.

DETAIL OF LABORS.—The territory of this district is, I think, the largest in the State. The distance which I am compelled to travel, and the number of schools I have to visit, make my labors severe. I make two tours thorough the district per year, for the purpose of examining teachers. The interval between these and the time schools get fairly commenced, I occupy in the formation and alteration of school districts.

We have a teachers’ association in the county which meets semi-annually. I always attend these, and also the teachers’ institute. The remainder of my time is occupied in visiting schools, school examination, &c.

Very respectfully yours,

M. L. LAUGHLIN,

*School Commissioner.*

HAMMOND, *December 20, 1862.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

HON. V. M. RICE, *Sup’t Public Instruction :*

There has been a fair attendance of scholars during the past year, so far as I am able to judge; although the provisions for instruction, in many instances, are not what they should be. Much time has been lost to the districts from the inconvenience and coldness of school houses, from the great variety of text books used, and from the limited amount of apparatus in the schools. The usual attendance of scholars at school is from five to seventeen years of age, and the average time of each scholar will not, I think, exceed six months per year. From these causes, and others which may be named, the progress of the schools has not been all that is desirable, during the past year. A number of the districts have opposed, from year to year, the building of school houses, and the consequence is the scholars are backward, and the schools are not taking their places in the march of improvement. Some action, by which those districts shall be required to furnish suitable accommodations for their children, is essential, and I hope it may receive your favorable consideration.

Nearly one-third of the present teachers are males, and about one-half of the whole number follow teaching as a permanent business. About one-third of all the teachers have been in the practice of attending the institutes and associations. The wages of gentlemen teachers are from \$20 to \$30 per month, and of ladies from \$12 to \$20 per month.

We have found a great deficiency of qualification in the common branches. While some are laboring to make themselves competent, others have offered themselves as teachers, poorly qualified, especially in geography, orthography and civil government. The number of Normal school graduates now employed is very limited, and we think that the school would receive great encouragement by the employment of teachers who have availed themselves of the privileges offered by the State for their qualification.

We have but one academy, and that is well sustained by a local fund, and funds, we believe, received from the State, and it renders valuable aid in advancing educational interests in the district. Teachers' classes have also enabled a number to prepare themselves for the duties devolving upon them.

There has been an increase in the number of private schools, I believe, during the past year. The number of children taught is 495.

There are a number of valuable district libraries, while many have not received the care and attention they should receive by the people. Some districts have used their library money for school purposes, while others have allowed it to accumulate for the purpose of purchasing globes and maps for their schools. Prompted by these feelings, the people have, in a number of instances, allowed their libraries to decrease in value and number.

Many of the districts have decided that one trustee is preferable to three, and they now have but one to discharge the duties devolving upon the office; and I have found that when but one is employed, the reports of such districts usually require fewer corrections than those where more are employed.

I assumed the duties of the office on the 13th day of November last, and found a large amount of labor necessary to be done immediately, and through your indulgence and the forbearance of the people, I have been able to discharge those duties, and I can but hope that I shall discharge all my official duties in such a manner as will secure the greatest good to those entrusted to my care.

Your obedient servant,

CLARK BAKER,

*School Commissioner.*

### THIRD DISTRICT.

The undersigned school commissioner of the third assembly district, St. Lawrence county, N. Y., begs leave to forward this supplementary report to the Department of Public Instruction:

The attendance of pupils of school age in this district is about 70 per cent. The rate-bill has, in my opinion, the effect to reduce the attendance most materially. The public sentiment in regard to the rate-bill is a total aversion to it, except by those who are beyond its reach.

The provision for the instruction of the young is not as good as is

desirable. Many of the school houses are old, dilapidated buildings, unfit for the purposes intended, with but few appendages, and those of a low order, small, inconvenient sites; few out-buildings or shade trees. There are, however, a few noble exceptions, where the inhabitants have taken pride in giving an inviting aspect to the school house and its accompaniments. The houses are usually warmed by stoves, and ventilated by cracks and crevices in the walls, broken windows, and sometimes by holes through the roof, where water, snow or sunlight makes its unobstructed ingress. This, however, is not universally true. Some are warmed by furnaces, and ventilated by registers in the walls or overhead, well and tastefully arranged. The supply of apparatus is mostly limited to globes, maps and blackboards; with the two former many of our schools are not well supplied. The text books in general use are Webster's unabridged Dictionary, Parker and Watson's Series of Readers, Davies' Arithmetics, Robinson's and Davies' Algebras, McNally's and Monteith's Geographies, Wells and Quackenbos' Grammar, Willard's U. S. History, and Young's Civil Government—these being the studies usually pursued, in connection with orthography, in its different departments.

The pupils usually commence attending school at about the age of four years, and leave at sixteen or seventeen, and the average time to each pupil does not, I believe, exceed three months in a year. Still I think the progress of the schools is as good as could be expected, considering the untoward circumstances; and a good degree of interest is being awakened in the minds of the public in regard to them. The most urgent wants of the schools are a more active, vigilant and watchful care by the patrons, and a more cordial support of teachers and school officers in the discharge of their public duties. For the two years past the whole number of teachers employed in each year was 328, of whom two-thirds were females. Those who follow teaching as a permanent employment are but few, not to exceed 15 per cent, and they devote somewhere from 10 to 15 years to their profession, at about \$16 per month in summer, and \$20 in winter, for females, and about \$30 for males; those who follow it temporarily get from 10 to 15 per cent. less. About 25 per cent. attend institutes and associations. I usually examine in geography, grammar, arithmetic, reading, spelling, orthography, civil government and history, endeavoring to give a close, scrutinizing examination, but am not able to realize my ideal of a teacher, and I doubt much if I shall be able to do so. I find teachers best prepared in mathematics and geography, and the most deficient in reading and spelling. Not more than 5 per cent. have taken periodicals or studied books especially calculated to prepare them for teaching. I have granted the past year about 60 per cent of the second grade certificates, 37 per cent. of the third grade, and 3 per cent of the first grade. The demand for teachers of high qualifications is very limited indeed, and hardly equal to the supply. There are no graduates from the State Normal



school; one undergraduate. We have had some of them, but they did not succeed extremely well, and have been on the whole detrimental to the interests of that school.

In regard to the academies in this district, I must refer you to their reports to the Regents of the University for statements of their libraries, apparatus, &c. The academies are: the St. Lawrence, located in the village of Potsdam, on Raquette river; number of buildings two, four stories high; built of the Potsdam sandstone; large and commodious; in good repair, and finely arranged for school purposes and the accommodation of the students. The studies generally pursued are the classics, with the common English branches; also French and drawing. A musical department is connected with the academy, Prof. Favil having it in charge. The teachers are paid by the proceeds from tuition bills, and apportionments of money by the proper State authority, amounting in the aggregate to about \$2,000 annually. The rates of tuition are for the higher branches, \$7; common English, \$4.50 per quarter; music, \$12; French, \$4; drawing, \$3. For the last two years the instruction given to the teachers' classes has, in my opinion, been decidedly beneficial, well adapted to the wants of the teachers, and I believe that those who have been instructed therein have made themselves more useful in their vocation for having enjoyed the benefit of such instruction. The number of students last term was 140; present term, 90; about one-fifth of them 12 to 15, one-half from 15 to 20, and the remainder over 20 years of age.

Lawrenceville academy is located in the town of Lawrence; has been in operation two years. One building three stories high, built of brick; is a fine building, and beautifully located. J. B. Young, A. M., principal. The branches taught in this institution, are similar to those taught in St. Lawrence academy. Teachers supported from similar sources. Rates of tuition \$1.00 less per quarter. Number of students for the fall term, 130; present term, 80. The ages of students range about the same as those in St. Lawrence.

The number of private schools within the past year in this district, is 17; showing a decrease of 10 per cent. from last year. 417 pupils have attended such schools, less or more, within the year.

The district school libraries, in my opinion, are of little or no use to the reading community. New books are purchased only by such districts as are by law compelled to. The librarian, as a general thing, gives but little attention to the discharge of his duty. The books are scattered through the district, and but occasionally find their way to the librarian's depository. I think the appropriation does not afford the advantages to community that it would in some other form. These libraries have some good and standard works of history; but, as a whole, the character of the books is unsuited to the taste of the people among whom they are scattered, being held in very low estimation by the public. Almost every family has its library, and, except the lower and poorer classes, all take some kind of a weekly or daily paper. Within

the past year the number taking such papers has been unusually large, and so much other reading matter is to be had, and at very low rates, that little attention is given to the district libraries.

The sentiment in regard to one or three trustees is various. Still, I think, the majority of the people are in favor of one. Full 60 per cent. of the trustees have complied with No. 116 of the Code.

Our last institute was in session 12 days. The following named gentlemen were employed as instructors: Prof. Andrew Roe, Prof. Richard Ellis, of Cazenovia, Rev. G. S. Winslow, of Watertown, and Prof. J. Madison Watson, of New York. Instruction was given in all the elementary branches of an English education, history, civil government, algebra, &c.

Names of lecturers and their subjects, as follows: Prof. J. S. Lee, of St. Lawrence University—subject, "Origin and Principles of the English Language;" Rev. L. Merrill Miller, of Ogdensburgh—subject, "John Milton;" Prof. J. B. Young, principal of Lawrenceville academy—subject, "Method of Education;" Prof. Osband—subject, "Chemistry and Philosophy;" Prof. J. Madison Watson, of New York—subject, "Orthoepy and Elocution;" Hon. E. W. Keyes, A. M., of Albany—subject, "Teachings of the day;" Rev. E. W. Plumb, principal of St. Lawrence academy—subject, "The Errors of Teaching." The whole number of teachers in attendance during the session, was 300. A good degree of interest was manifested by the people.

To give a full detail of the duties performed in my official capacity, would require more words than you have patience to examine; they are so multifarious and complex, so unlike from year to year, that I would be obliged to copy from my diary each day's proceedings. But as far as they are general, it is in examining teachers, refusing licenses, hearing scolding and complaints, settling district disputes, dividing and altering districts, to the satisfaction of some and the annoyance of others, urging teachers by all the motives possible to become better qualified for their labor, looking after them in their schools, trying to inspire them with a love for their work, encouraging them by advice and counsel, using sometimes the official goad to whip them to duty; succeeding none too well in all my efforts. Having the satisfaction, however, to believe that the schools are constantly and gradually improving, and doing as well as could be reasonably hoped for under the circumstances, I am fully satisfied that a faithful, careful, and thorough supervision is the best and only means to bring our schools to their true position; and that when our schools are not improving, it is chargeable to the inefficiency or negligence of the school commissioner.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. W. BLOSS,

*School Commissioner.*

## SCHENECTADY COUNTY.

PRINCETOWN, January 1, 1862.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Sup't Public Instruction* :

Dear Sir—The report called for in your last circular I will endeavor to give you briefly.

There are 3,998 persons of school age residing in the different towns; of that number about one-half are in regular attendance upon the schools. All the schools, with the exception of one, made a rate-bill to supply the deficiency of teachers' wages, to the satisfaction of the district. Those residing in the different districts that are not able to pay are generally exempted from payment.

As to the condition of the school houses, they vary much in appearance. There are 55 school houses under my jurisdiction, the larger portion of which are in good condition, properly heated, and ventilated by letting the windows down from above, while some have ventilators in the ceiling.

As to school apparatus, the principal is maps and globes. Every school has maps or globes, or both.

A great variety of text books are in use. The principal are Sanders' series of Readers, Thompson's and Davies' Arithmetics, Colton's Geography, Bullions' and Brown's Grammars, and Spencerian penmanship.

Generally pupils begin to attend school at from 5 to 7 years old, and end their attendance from 17 to 21.

The most urgent want is a uniformity of text books.

As to teachers, the greater part of them are females. The schools are, with few exceptions, taught by females in the summer, and some of them in the winter; there are more female teachers engaged in teaching this winter than ever before. It was formerly the custom to have a male teacher for the winter, and a female teacher in the summer, making about an equal number of each. There are but few male teachers that follow teaching as a permanent business; while the greater portion make it a temporary employment during the winter, or so long as they can find no business that will pay any better. Wages vary from \$8 to \$13 per month, and board, for female teachers, in the summer; and from \$12, and board, to \$28 and \$30, without board for males.

The teachers' institute, at its last session, was more largely attended than any previously held in the county.

I require applicants for certificates to be of good moral character; and as to qualifications, I am somewhat governed by the school that he or she is to teach (that is in some cases). I find, upon examination, generally, that the greatest deficiency is in grammar and writing; but when I meet with graduates of the Normal school, I always find good schools, and of higher character; the same may be said with regard to undergraduates; also graduates of academies are first-class teachers.

There are no academies in this county at present.



There is one private school, with about 30 scholars in attendance. This is the first time that it has been reported.

There are no parochial schools, and no schools for colored children.

Some districts manifest a great interest in keeping the library in good condition, and in getting new books, while others think them of little or no importance. The books are of the usual class found in school libraries.

Most of the districts have three trustees; I think that one is preferable, for when there is but one, the business of the district is generally attended to with greater promptness and efficiency. Only a small portion of the schools are furnished with sufficient blank books to keep the statistics of the district.

The teachers' institute was in session twelve working days. Instruction was given by J. H. French, LL. D., of Syracuse; A. M. S. Carpenter, A. M., of the union school in Schenectady; and Prof. S. W. Clark. Instruction was given in object teaching, reading, writing, geography, grammar, mental and written arithmetic, and vocal music. There were 119 different teachers in attendance, and there was a greater interest manifested by the public than ever before.

I have always endeavored to execute the duties of the office to the best of my ability, seeking to promote sound education, and to elevate the character and qualifications of teachers.

SAMUEL A. WEAST,

*School Commissioner.*

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### SCHOHARIE COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

Four-fifths of the children between 4 and 21 years of age attend school. Rate-bills have but little effect on the attendance, and public sentiment favors the rate-bill system.

The school houses are in fair condition, and have been much improved during the last three years. About one-half of them have good sites and outbuildings, and are ventilated by lowering the upper sashes of the windows. All the school houses are warmed by stoves, have water pails, cups, brooms, &c.; one-fourth are furnished with globes; all with black-boards; three-fourths with Webster's unabridged dictionary, and with maps of the United States and the State of New York; about one-fourth with the map of Schoharie.

Pupils generally commence school at the age of 6 years, and end at 18; and attend from five to six months during the year.

The branches of study generally pursued in the schools are orthography, reading, geography, arithmetic, history, grammar, algebra, definition of words, philosophy and composition.

The text books now generally in use are Sanders' Readers, full series, Thomson's series of Arithmetics, Brown's Grammar, and Davies' Algebras.

Three-eighths of the teachers are males. About one-fourth follow teaching as a permanent business, the per cent. of male and female teachers permanently employed being about the same. Male teachers receive about \$18 per month, exclusive of board; and females, \$12. Three-fourths attend the teachers' institute; and five-eighths attend my teachers' association. Nearly one-half have studied some work on theory and practice of teaching. I examine my teachers in the branches laid down in the Code. I find them most deficient in grammar, penmanship, philosophy and composition. I have issued first grade licenses to about one-eighth, second grade to three-eighths, and third grade to one-half of the teachers. One Normal graduate is employed in my district.

There is one academy, with twelve students between the ages of ten and twenty-five years; good building, library, and apparatus—chemical and philosophical.

There are six private schools, with 141 pupils attending the same. One school for colored children in the village of Schoharie, and about twenty-five pupils attending the same; it is supported by a tax on the inhabitants of the said village.

One-half of the district libraries are in good condition, and are much esteemed; one-fourth are in ordinary condition, and one-fourth bad.

Seventy districts have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

I have made 248 visits. I generally visit from one to two schools per day. Thirty-three districts have elected one trustee.

• Respectfully yours,

BARTHOLOMEW BECKER,

*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Sup't Public Instruction*:

Sir—The following is respectfully submitted relative to the condition of the common schools in the second commissioner district of Schoharie county:

That the schools are constantly improving, and trying to keep step with the progressive spirit of the age, even in this "*sequestered region*," is very generally understood.

In a country so sparsely settled many irregularities and inconveniences will attend the progress of education. Among the impediments to progress is the existence of so many *small, feeble schools*, which cannot sustain themselves as they should, and it would be almost impossible to consolidate them, the country is so broken by hills and valleys. If united, the school houses would necessarily have to stand at one end or side of the district, in consequence of the roads generally running nearly parallel, and, as a result, the children would have to cross fields, hills, valleys and creeks, or travel two or three miles around to get to school. Districts thus situated, cannot so easily adopt and partici-

pate in all the improvements of the day. Some small districts have been annulled and united with others, while in a few cases it has been found necessary to form new districts to accommodate growing settlements.

Nevertheless, in taking a general survey of the present condition and prospects of our schools, and contrasting them with the past, I think very much can be discerned that is hopeful and truly cheering.

ATTENDANCE, NON-ATTENDANCE AND RATE-BILLS.—Among the many difficulties in the way of improvement of the pupils in our schools, irregularity of attendance is the most grievous. I have visited but few schools where the teacher did not complain of this. Parents are slow to believe that their work had better be left undone than their children be kept from school. A great many are kept out for the most trivial causes. The present rate-bill system seems to frighten many who think every absent mark on the teacher's roll will exempt them from the payment of so much money. I think were they charged for absences, this detention at home would occur less frequently. Again I know many districts that are abundantly able to support a good school for ten months in a year that have only two terms of three months each, just long enough to use up the public money and obtain it for another year. Urge upon the inhabitants the importance of having more schools, and their reply is: "We can't afford it in these *hard times*." Many districts, however, support good schools for ten months in the year, and in others some have the will, but are unable to carry it out on account of irregularity and non-attendance. I am more and more convinced that these evils demand legislative correction.

SCHOOL HOUSES.—Great improvements have been made in the past three or four years in school houses. Several new houses have been built, and many have been repaired and made comfortable; still there is room for great improvements. Too many are wholly unfit for the purpose for which they are used. Located in the highway, hence with no yards, shade trees or play grounds, imperfectly constructed, without any proper means of ventilation, destitute of every appendage usually *deemed essential and convenient*, they are not creditable to any civilized community.

I might enumerate many miserable apologies for school houses with leaky roofs and broken walls, only fit abodes for moles, bats and owls. I would not be understood to represent these cases as beyond all hope, for the spirit and interest already manifested in many sections of the country indicate a better state of things. There are many in these districts who feel interested in the elevation of our common schools, and in having better school houses provided for their children.

Within two or three years past a few school houses have been built which reflect credit upon the county. I cannot forbear to speak of one built in the flourishing village of Jefferson, situated on the green near where the old academy stood, which is an ornament to the place. Another large and commodious school house has been erected at Fulton-



ham, which is indicative of the spirit and intelligence of the inhabitants of the district, and two in the town of Sharon, one at Rockville and the other at Leesville, which are fine buildings, speaking well for the taste and liberality of the people in those localities.

APPARATUS.—But few schools have any apparatus except blackboards, and not more than three years ago there were ten districts that were destitute even of them. Now all have them, and a few have outline maps and globes. These constitute all the apparatus, except that a few have Page's normal and Clark's grammatical charts. It is to be hoped that this prevailing destitution of school apparatus will not continue much longer, but that some measures will be taken to supply every district in the county with letter cards, outline maps, globes, tellurians and Holbrook's geological and geometrical apparatus. I would also recommend that every district be furnished with the usual appliances for object teaching.

If our schools could be provided with such apparatus, "object teaching" would soon become general, and the scholar, instead of wrestling long years in gaining a knowledge of size, weight, color, measure, time, distance, and the elements of physical science, would learn them in a very short time by means of the objects themselves, which would at all times refresh his memory and bring them to mind. By such means the instruction imparted in the sciences would be rendered more attractive and be better understood. The real interest that might be thus awakened, and the advancement that could be made in a single term, would be worth far more than the cost of the necessary apparatus. I hope the time is not far distant when teachers will cease to complain for want of maps, globes and other school apparatus. The application of the library money, with a light tax for a few years, would furnish all the districts with the needed apparatus and school furniture.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—As regards the libraries, they are, as a general thing, in a most miserable condition. The books are drawn without any memorandum being made by the librarians, and are scattered throughout the district, and seldom find their way back. I am sorry to say that our district libraries are not prized by the people as they have been, or read as much by the children as they should be, nor is that supervision or care taken of them by the inhabitants that the "school law directs." Probably the reason for this is that a large majority of our families are supplied with private libraries, books being so cheap, and with newspapers and other periodicals, which seem to afford all the reading the public demands.

It is to be regretted that the library money should not be applied to the purchase of scientific apparatus for our schools, for I believe it would benefit the children more in this way than in expending it for books or anything else. I venture to suggest for your consideration, and for recommendation to the Legislature, that the State Superinten-

dent of Public Instruction *be authorized* to direct the expenditure of the library money apportioned to each district for school apparatus, and as a condition for the future participation in the library money, that every district raise as much by tax as they receive from that source.

TEXT-BOOKS.—Four or five years ago it was not an uncommon thing to find three or four different kinds of spelling-books, arithmetics, geographies, grammars, and reading books in the same school. A very great improvement has been made in this respect. The books in general use are Sanders' Spelling-book and series of Readers, Colton and Fitch's Geography, Thomson's Arithmetic, Brown's Grammar, Robinson's Algebra, Willson's History, Wells' Natural Philosophy, &c., &c.

But a change is going on, substituting Clark's Grammar for Brown's, and Willson's Readers for Sanders', and Robinson's for Thomson's series of Arithmetics. The changes I have just spoken of were made by the teachers at our institute this fall. I am inclined to believe that as long as teachers are determined to have the *best books*, we shall be annoyed with an endless variety of text-books.

The branches most generally pursued in our schools are spelling, reading, arithmetic, geography, grammar, and, in our most advanced schools, analysis, algebra, history, composition, philosophy, physiology, and geometry.

The ages at which pupils begin and end their attendance at school vary very much in different districts. Many send their children to school when they are only three or four years old to get them out of the way, while others wait until they are six or seven. I think, from what I have seen, that children enter school at about five, and leave it at about sixteen years of age—only attending a short time in the winter after they have passed their twelfth year.

I can safely say of the schools under my charge, they are advancing. This is evident from the fact that better qualified teachers are now demanded than formerly. More attention is paid to the subject of education, and the best methods of teaching are being discussed by both parents and teachers. These are indications of reform.

Among the most urgent wants of our schools, as I have already noticed, is a more regular and prompt attendance; a full supply of maps, globes, and other school apparatus; a class of teachers, either male or female, that follow teaching as a business or profession summer and winter; a uniformity of the best text-books; the dissemination of the "New York Teacher" in every school district through the trustees; and a more enlightened and enterprising public spirit on the subject of our common schools.

TEACHERS.—The number of teachers employed during the last school year, according to the trustees' reports, is one hundred and ninety-eight, of whom ninety-three are males and one hundred and five are females. Of all these, but few follow teaching as a fixed and permanent employment. The teachers in this county, with some few exceptions, devote

but a few months in each year to the business of teaching. But few schools employ the same teacher during the summer and winter terms, for the reason that trustees and parents generally wish to employ cheap teachers, and these only seek temporary employment. This frequent change of teachers is the sorest evil connected with our common schools. It is the Alpine difficulty in the way of progress. It is impossible to overrate the evils that result from it. How long shall this quarterly and semi-annual change of teachers continue? Ask the trustees, and they say the reason they change teachers so often is they cannot support a good male teacher throughout the year, and hence they hire a man for three months in the winter, and a lady for three or four months in the summer—the time always depending upon how long the public money holds out. The money which is now divided between the two would pay a woman of the highest intellectual capacity and qualifications for a whole year; and thus would supersede the necessity of changing teachers or closing school at all, except for a vacation of a few weeks. Is there no way to get rid of this *old fashion* of changing teachers every term?

The wages paid to male teachers varies from \$12 to \$30; the average price is about \$18 per month, and bread, which they must beg from door to door. Ladies get from \$1.25 to \$2.50 per week, and the average price is about \$2 per week.

In relation to the examination of teachers, I regard the moral and intellectual qualifications of teachers, and their ability to teach, of the highest importance. I require of teachers, when strangers, testimonials of good moral character. They are required to give a statement of their ideal of the teacher's character and work, and are specially examined as to principles and methods of instruction in all the common school branches.

I find teachers, as a class, quite deficient in general intelligence, and but very few have ever read any works upon the theory and practice of teaching. However, a majority of those employed are well qualified for the stations they occupy, so far as scholastic attainments are concerned. When we take into consideration what a combination of acquirements and virtues are necessarily required to form a successful teacher, it is not to be wondered at that many are, in some points, deficient.

The branches they are best qualified to teach, I find are reading, spelling and arithmetic; and those in which they are most deficient are geography, grammar and history. Some that are well qualified, so far as learning is concerned, fail altogether in ability to communicate to others the knowledge they possess, while others are deficient in government.

The grade of certificates granted depends entirely upon the candidates' ability, general information, and experience in teaching. To those who make teaching a profession, and have that peculiar tact, or have acquired superior skill in governing and managing their schools, I have given



first grade; to those who have less experience, and are not so well qualified to teach and govern, second grades; and third grades to those who have no experience. I grant mostly of the second grade, some of the third, and very few of the first.

It is gratifying to be able to state that a decided improvement has been made within a few years past in the qualifications of the teachers. This progress and improvement are plainly to be seen at every succeeding examination. I am satisfied that a majority of the teachers are determined to qualify themselves for their calling, and would follow teaching as a business if the people were willing to pay for it. Whenever the trustees desire better schools, and are willing to provide the means, there will soon be an abundant supply of well qualified teachers; but so long as the opinion prevails with parents that the common schools are only places to send children to get them out of the way; so long as the only question put by the trustees to the teacher is: "How cheap will you teach?" just so long we shall have poor schools and poor teachers.

There has been only one Normal graduate engaged in teaching in my district the past year, but several undergraduates have been teaching with eminent success. It is to be hoped that our schools will soon be furnished with more graduates from that institution. As the public are becoming more and more acquainted with their superior skill and efficiency, there is a greater demand for their services.

ACADEMIES.—There is but one academy in the county, and that is situated in the first commissioner's district, and probably my associate will make a full report to the Department in relation to it. There are, however, in the second commissioner's district, two institutions of learning, the New York Conference Seminary, and the Warnerville Union Literary Institute, of which I am not required to report.

TRUSTEES.—Since the enactment which gave the school districts the right to have one or three trustees, there has been a great diversity of opinion among the people concerning it. Many districts having discussed the question, have decided to have but one trustee, while others adhere to the old system of having three. In looking over the trustees' reports, I find about two-thirds of the districts still continue to elect three trustees.

In a great many districts very injudicious selections are made. Men are frequently elected who have little or no direct interest in the school, and who are very inefficient in the discharge of their duties.

But very few of the trustees have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction. Nearly all the districts are destitute of "school registers," for keeping the daily, weekly and quarterly rolls of attendance. I am satisfied that no reliance can be placed upon the reports in relation to the length of time that pupils have attended school during the year.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—The last teachers' institute for this district was held at Cobleskill, continuing in session two weeks. The names of the

persons employed as instructors, and their residences, are as follows: Prof. A. Smyth Knight, Fonda; Prof. T. Moore, Cobleskill; John Van Voris, Esq., West Fulton; Mrs. A. C. Smith and A. C. Smith, Cobleskill.

Instruction was given in orthography, reading and elocution, intellectual and written arithmetic, geography, penmanship, grammar, algebra and physical geography.

Able and eloquent lectures were delivered before the institute by the following named gentlemen: E. W. Keyes, Esq., subject, "Life in Education and Education in Life;" M. B. Boyce, A. M., subject, "Practical Education;" H. W. Martin, A. M., subject, "Self-Education;" Prof. A. Smyth Knight, subject, "Mental Philosophy;" L. H. Jackson, Esq., subject, "Oratory;" W. S. Clark, Esq., subject, "The Teacher's Profession;" A. C. Smith, subject, "Old and New Methods of Teaching."

Over one hundred and fifty teachers were in attendance last year at Sharon Springs. This year the number was one hundred and eighty-nine.

The western district of old Schoharie has lost none of her spirit of advancement and progressive action which has for the past three or four years been awarded to her, but is still pressing on, infused with the glorious motto of her State—"Excelsior." Our last institute is thought by many to have been the most interesting and successful, as it was the largest ever held in the county.

The growing public interest in favor of these annual gatherings, and their practical utility to teachers, have established them as a distinguishing feature of our State educational system. They are beginning to be considered by parents and trustees as normal schools, in which teachers are taught not only the principles of science and teaching, but the art of applying this knowledge in the school room; and I hold it as fully proved that no teacher can participate in their exercises, and enter into their spirit without acquiring a higher idea of the duties and responsibilities of his calling, and without forming the resolution to discharge them more acceptably.

DETAIL OF LABORS PERFORMED.—There are in this district eight towns and one hundred and two school districts, scattered over its hills and along its valleys. I have, during the past year, made two hundred and fifteen school visits, and have endeavored to make my examinations as thorough and at the same time as interesting as possible. It has been my aim and ambition to so conduct my official visits as to be regarded by the scholars and teachers as a friend coming to assist them in their various duties, sympathizing with and encouraging them in their difficulties.

My attention during the visitation of the schools has been directed to the various methods of teaching, the manner of conducting recitations, the classification of pupils, and their discipline and government. Much effort was expended in trying to break up the dull, drawling, monotonous style of reading so prevalent in our schools, to induce teachers to

require their pupils to read in an easy, natural tone of voice, as they would talk, and to introduce order and system in the schools. I think a reformation is going on in the method of teaching, and with proper effort it will continue till our schools reach a position much in advance of the present.

I have found a great deal to be done in revising the old records, and in correcting the imperfect descriptions of the boundaries of school districts. I have also had an almost endless number of applications to set off persons from one district to another, thus causing the alteration of districts, which is a fruitful source of contention and dissatisfaction. This labor has required a great deal of time and attention—keeping the districts united and harmonious.

To afford all teachers an opportunity to procure certificates, I have visited every town under my jurisdiction twice each year—in the fall and spring, after giving timely notice in the county papers of the time and place of holding meetings for the purpose of granting certificates to those who were qualified, thus saving the teachers the loss of time and the inconvenience of coming to see me; and I have also given general notice that I would be found at home on Saturdays to attend to all business connected with my office.

Sometimes, at the close of my examinations, or in the evening, I have lectured before the class, and such others as chose to attend, upon the subject of teaching.

Thus, in compliance with the requirements of the Superintendent, I have endeavored, as briefly as possible, to present faithfully and clearly the educational condition of the schools under my charge; the causes which resist or retard their improvement, and the means that are now being put forth to remove these difficulties, together with the actual or probable results of these efforts.

In conclusion, I cannot refrain from speaking of the uniform kindness, courtesy, and generous hospitality which have been so liberally extended to me throughout my entire term of office by the teachers and inhabitants of my district.

Very respectfully yours,

A. C. SMITH,

*School Commissioner.*

COBLESKILL, December 31, 1863.

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## SCHUYLER COUNTY.

HON. V. M. RICE:

Sir—The undersigned herewith respectfully transmits to the Superintendent of Public Instruction his report on the condition of education within the county of Schuyler.

COMMON SCHOOLS.—Not more than one-half in summer, and about three-



fourths in winter of the persons of school age, attend school. In many districts the attendance is quite regular, particularly in winter.

**RATE BILLS.**—In several districts—about one-eighth—they have an effect upon a few families, about two in each district not sending as much as they would on account of the rate bills. In regard to public sentiment, I have heard no complaint.

**SCHOOL HOUSES, &c.**—The school houses are generally good; about one-half have been built but a few years, the remainder are in a comfortable condition; several are located near the highways, but those most recently built are generally at a good distance from the road; except four, all have wood-houses, &c. Furniture generally good; warmed by stoves. Those recently built, say fourteen, have ventilators; the rest lower the windows.

**SCHOOL APPARATUS, &c.**—Twenty-two schools have globes; about one-half maps; sixteen have Page's Normal chart.

**TEXT BOOKS.**—Sanders' series, Davies', Thomson's, and Adams' Arithmetic, Monteith's and McNally's Geography, Brown's Grammar, Willson's History, Davies' Algebra, and a few Davies' Geometry.

**TEACHERS.**—About one male to two females; the males teach mostly in the winter, and the females in summer, but this winter the greater portion will be females, on account of the war. The males teach about five months; females, four months. Wages of males, from \$18 to \$40 per month; females, from \$1.75 to \$5 per week. With the exception of ten, and two holding State certificates, I believe they all attended the institute. Our teachers' associations have been well attended, and much interest in the cause of education manifested. In our examinations we have found it necessary, on account of the advanced state of many schools, to extend the standard of qualification beyond the requirements mentioned in the Code. The branches of study in which we find teachers best prepared are spelling, reading, penmanship and arithmetic. 16 have first grade certificates, 130 the second, and 14 the third. Many of our teachers possess very respectable qualifications. I know of only four having State certificates; two of these I know about, having been in their schools; they are an honor to the profession.

**ACADEMY.**—The academy is at Watkins, a commodious brick building, with all the conveniences for such an institution. Number of students, 121, of which 42 are females, averaging 14 years; and 79 males, averaging 13 years. The branches taught are reading, spelling, penmanship, grammar, geography, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, book-keeping, sciences, *i. e.*, natural philosophy, chemistry, &c., Latin, Greek, and French languages, drawing and painting. Number in teachers' class, 20. Library, 224 volumes, cost \$150. Apparatus, chemical, philosophical and school, cost \$250. Wages paid teachers: principal, \$550; two females, one \$320, the other \$135. Means of support: tuition bills and what is received from the Regents. The teachers instructed in the academy are among the best in the county.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—None of any account—on the decrease.

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.—None.

UNION FREE SCHOOLS.—Two—Havana and Watkins.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—In many districts the people seem to have lost all interest for them. Some have a respectable collection and exhibit much interest for them; but in the greater part of our districts the trustees apply the library money to the teachers' wages.

TRUSTEES.—The one trustee system is on the ascendant—about one-fifth have but one; about one-half have complied with No. 116 Code.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.—Number of days in session, 11. Instructors, S. R. Sweet, Dugway, Oswego county; L. G. Thomas, Reading. Subjects of instruction—Principles of Education, Intellectual and Practical Arithmetic, Elementary and Rhetorical Reading, Algebra, Grammar, Book-keeping, History, Geography and use of Globes, Natural Science, Composition, Elocution, Lectures and Discussions, and Vocal Music.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—1st. Nearly all the schools have been visited twice, and some of the larger ones three times during the year.

2d. The examination of teachers.

3d. Alteration of districts.

4th. Settling district difficulties, of which, till within a few months, there have been many.

5th. Counseling with trustees and teachers with regard to their respective duties, &c.

LECTURES AT INSTITUTE.—S. R. Sweet, "On Education;" Amos Brown, "Teachers' Responsibility;" F. S. Howe, "General Topics on Schools and Teachers;" Mr. Carr, "Popular Education;" N. A. Calkins, "Object Teaching;" C. G. Winfield, "Moral Sensibilities."

REMARKS.—The schools are in a progressive state; the teachers ambitious and desirous to excel and to give satisfaction. In fact, the schools for the last year, with two exceptions, have given *entire* satisfaction. I have had much pleasure in noticing their prosperity.

STATE TEACHERS.—Only one attended and took an interest in the institute; two others residing near the village took no part in it; they came in occasionally as spectators.

We have no district difficulties at present; all is harmony in our county. People, I believe, are well satisfied with our present school system.

Respectfully,

CHAS. G. WINFIELD,

*School Commissioner.*

HAYANA, December 1, 1862.

## SENECA COUNTY.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction* :

I have the honor to report that we have every evidence in this county of the gradual development of a healthier public sentiment in regard to common schools. Our present system of public instruction commands the assent of all thinking men. The logic of recent national events has forced us to realize "the inseparable relation of universal intelligence and probity to the strength and perpetuity of a republican government, and the moral claim of every child to an education commensurate with the importance and dignity of his obligations and duties as an upright and loyal citizen." As an evidence that this claim is felt with more force than formerly, I will state here that three free schools have been organized in this county during the past year, under the law of 1853, to wit: District No. 2, in Fayette; No. 8, in Seneca Falls; and No. 15, in Waterloo; making, with the one before existing in Waterloo, four in the county. These schools are all in a flourishing condition.

ATTENDANCE.—The attendance of persons of school age upon our common schools, though not so general as desirable, has been fully up to the former average, notwithstanding a large quota of our population has been called to the battle-field, thus producing a scarcity of laborers severely felt, and sensibly affecting the attendance upon both our common schools and academies.

RATE-BILLS.—Rate-bills seriously affect the attendance in small districts. Such districts must necessarily hire cheap teachers to avoid oppressive rate-bills; and thus, having inefficient schools, a discouraging apathy generally pervades them; while our large, healthy districts, employing good teachers, pay comparatively much larger rate-bills without grumbling.

PROVISION FOR INSTRUCTION OF PUPILS.—There is adequate provision for the public instruction of all the children in the county, with the exception of those in the villages of Waterloo and Seneca Falls. The latter has a population of 2,183 persons of school age, and its public schools cannot accommodate one-third of that number. Hence the necessity of private schools, of which we find 11 in that village, attended by an aggregate of 300 pupils. The former, though much better provided for, still maintains four private schools, with an aggregate attendance of 100 pupils.

SCHOOL HOUSES, &c.—The character and condition of our school houses, sites, out-buildings, &c., are steadily improving from year to year. Dilapidated old buildings by the road-side are still used in many instances, but they are rapidly giving place to commodious structures, surrounded with play grounds, out-buildings, &c., and furnished within with comfortable seats and desks.

SCHOOL APPARATUS.—The supply of school apparatus is limited to blackboards and maps. Few districts possess anything beside these.



**TEXT BOOKS.**—Text books are generally well supplied. The branches of study generally pursued are spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar, and in many schools, physical geography, history, physiology and algebra.

Public opinion is now generally averse to sending pupils to school at so early an age as formerly. Few children commence school under five to seven years of age, except in large villages, where those much younger are sent, apparently to get them out of the way. A large majority of the children, especially in rural districts, do not attend school regularly after they are about twelve years of age, being kept at labor a part of each year; and very few over eighteen years of age attend at all.

Though the general standing and progress of common schools are much in advance of former years, there is yet much room for improvement. What our schools need more than anything else is an increased earnestness of interest and sympathy for them among the mass of the people. Let the public mind once be fully aroused to the transcendent importance of common school education; let the vastness of the issues involved be clearly seen and felt; and men will act. The teachers' vocation will be rightly estimated, professional teachers will multiply, and that constant change of instructors, so detrimental to the best interests of our schools, will no longer be necessary.

**TEACHERS.**—Of the teachers employed during the past year, 38 per cent. are males, and 62 per cent. females. Of the males, 14 per cent. follow teaching as a permanent employment; these generally devote five to fifteen years to the business, and their wages vary from \$25 to \$40 per month. Of the females, about 40 per cent. make teaching a permanent employment until they get married, which renders the time they devote to the business rather uncertain; their wages, as teachers, vary from \$10 to \$24 per month. The attendance of teachers upon institutes has been very general for several years past, and town teachers' associations are now being formed throughout our county; these cannot fail to produce good results. In my examinations of teachers, I use both oral and written questions; I find applicants generally best prepared to teach arithmetic and grammar, and most deficient in orthography, geography, history, &c. Few excel in penmanship; and good readers are very rare. About 25 per cent. of our teachers have studied some work on the theory and practice of teaching. The certificates granted are mostly of the second and third grades. Owing to the enlistment of some of our best teachers, the supply of first grade teachers has not equaled the demand this fall.

**NORMAL SCHOOL GRADUATES.**—We have had but *five Normal* graduates employed in this county during the past year. These graduates are usually excellent teachers; but I regret to say, that their general influence and zeal for the common good are not what we have a right to expect. They too often hold themselves aloof from teachers' institutes and associations, as though they belonged to a higher sphere than those

who, though following the same employment, have not enjoyed the same advantages.

ACADEMIES.—We have an academical department in the union school at Waterloo, and an academy at Seneca Falls, and one at Ovid. I have gathered the following statistics in relation to these institutions:

Seneca Falls Academy: Whole number of students during one year,	50
Students, 8 to 12 years of age.....	14
“ 12 to 16 years of age.....	22
“ 16 to 21 years of age.....	14
Volumes in library.....	500

Chemical and philosophical apparatus, out of repair and not used.

Studies pursued: English branches, mathematics, including geometry, Latin and Greek.

Teacher's salary, \$400. One teacher supported by Literature Fund and tuition. Tuition averages \$10 per year.

One brick building in moderate repair.

The Seneca Collegiate Institute at Ovid, presents the following statistics:

Whole number of pupils during the year.....	105
Number of pupils in primary department.....	30
Number in senior department, 10 to 14 years of age.....	40
“ “ “ 14 to 18 years of age.....	22
“ “ “ 18 years of age and upward.....	13

Volumes in library, about.....	500
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Chemical and philosophical apparatus worth \$600, but much in need of repair.

Studies pursued: The same as at Seneca Falls academy.

Teachers employed, 3. Teachers' salaries are paid from Literature Fund and tuition.

Teacher of primary department receive per year about..... \$100

Preceptress receives about..... 300

Assistant preceptress about..... 200

Principal receives the surplus arising from tuition, &c.; the amount being very uncertain and usually small.

One very large brick building, in tolerable repair, used for boarders. A commodious wing also of brick, used for school rooms.

The institution is heavily in debt.

Rate of tuition averages, music excepted, \$15 per year.

A teachers' class is taught every year in one of these institutions, with good practical results; yet there is evident need of more care in selecting the members of those classes.

LIBRARIES.—District school libraries are generally in a lamentable condition. I find it impossible to ascertain in most cases, the number of volumes belonging to such libraries with any degree of exactness. Very little interest is manifested in the subject. The books get scattered and lost, which in too many instances is not a matter of regret,

as there are many worthless selections made by trustees. These libraries when properly selected, did a good work in our school districts in former times; but in this day, when nearly every family is supplied with books of their own, and with newspapers and periodicals, they are hardly noticed, and the majority of our districts take the liberty of appropriating their library money for teachers' wages.

TRUSTEES.—About one-third of our districts have but one trustee, and public sentiment is gradually indorsing that plan. The requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction have been complied with by less than two-thirds of the districts in this county.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.—The annual session of our teachers' institute was held at Ovid, October 6–17, 1862. We were in session eleven days. One hundred and thirteen teachers were in attendance, and manifested a lively interest in all the exercises. The attendance was more regular than ever before, and the public interest more marked and gratifying. Instruction was given in all branches usually taught in common schools. The method of object teaching was also practically illustrated before the institute with a class of children, brought in for that purpose.

The following are the names of instructors: J. Homer French, LL. D., Syracuse; J. A. Gillet, A. M., Hector, Schuyler county; S. Holton, Seneca Falls; J. S. Boughton, Farmer, Seneca county.

LECTURERS AND THEIR SUBJECTS.—J. A. Gillet, "Education and Astronomy;" Judge Barlow, "Entomology;" M. F. Grove, "The Soul of Teaching."

A number of essays upon educational subjects and the practical duties of the teacher, were read by different teachers of this county. Our session was a most gratifying success, and will be productive of much good.

COMMISSIONERS' DUTIES AND LABORS.—I find it difficult to do all that should be done in a district so extended. I have visited and examined every school at least twice (one or two exceptions) during the year, suggesting such improvements in teaching and discipline as appeared necessary. I hold annually, in the spring of the year, examinations of teachers in each town of the county. The fall examinations take place at the institute. The above, with making reports and apportionments, settling disputes which sometimes arise in districts, and familiar talks or lectures in different localities, on subjects connected with common schools, form the major part of my labors. In discharging these duties and those incidental thereto, I have endeavored by every means in my power, (and I think with some success) to excite in teachers, trustees and the public generally an increased interest and activity in the cause of common school education.

P. V. N. BODINE,  
*School Commissioner.*



## STEUBEN COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

To the Hon. V. M. Rice :

The attendance upon the schools is generally good. During the winter term nine-tenths, and during the summer term about eight-tenths of those who should attend are present.

In the more rural districts the people are in favor of rate-bills. In villages they are generally in favor of free schools.

Six-tenths of the school houses are unfit for the purpose of instruction. The rest are good—very good. Warmed with box stoves; ventilated by holes in the walls—sometimes by lowering the upper window.

Apparatus consists chiefly of a single chart, or a few old maps. The union school at Bath has globes, maps, and charts.

Sanders' series of Readers and Spellers, Brown's Grammar, Davies' New Arithmetic, and Monteith's Geography are the text-books generally used.

The average age of commencing school is at about six years, and of leaving school about sixteen.

Our schools are not progressing as fast as before the war. There have been since then more of a call for cheap teachers, and a disposition to employ female teachers during the winter term. Very many of our best male teachers have gone to the war; yet, on the whole, the schools are flourishing.

Good trustees are wanted more than any other thing, who will not hire relatives because they are relatives, &c., and who will seek the good of the child with more zeal than they will squeeze a penny out of a teacher.

Two-thirds of the teachers who receive license are females. The majority of the schools in the winter term are, however, taught by males. A large proportion of the males work on the farm or in the shop in the summer. Very many of the females teach summers and attend school winters.

The average wages of the females in the summer is not quite two dollars per week; of the males in the winter season, about sixteen dollars a month. We have some fifty teachers who devote their whole time to the business of teaching. Only about half of the teachers in this district have been in the habit of attending the institutes.

I meet the teachers for examination twice a year in each town. The examinations are oral. I examine on all the common branches—mode of governing and general knowledge. I give a few first-class certificates; to old teachers generally the second grade; and to all new teachers the third. There are some ten or twelve Normal graduates in this district. Their influence is very good.

There is but one chartered academy in this district, located at Prattsburgh. It is not flourishing; only about fifty scholars on an average. They think of turning it into a union school. There are three important

private schools, which are called academies—mostly flourishing. There are no parochial schools. One colored school at Bath—a department of the union school. This union school is the only one, so far as I know, organized under the law of 1853.

Almost every school district has a library. A few of them are well kept; but generally their condition is bad. Many of the books are scattered through the district never to return to the library. They are, to a great extent, of no general value, though they may be to a few individuals who are fond of reading. The books are generally good. Of course, there are many small private libraries, and a goodly number of newspapers taken.

The preference generally is for three trustees. Not more than about one-eighth adopt the one trustee system.

THE LAST INSTITUTE.—The last institute was held ten working days. Prof. J. W. McLaurie, of Hammondsport, N. Y., was chief manager. Prof. Calkins, of New York city, assisted for about two days. The commissioner from Livingston county and the commissioners of this county assisted. Teachers were drilled on the common branches—principally as to the best modes of illustrating, of conveying knowledge, of governing schools, &c. The object method was especially dwelt upon by Prof. Calkins. Specimens of different methods of teaching were given by the teachers themselves.

Prof. McLaurie, Prof. Smith, of Prattsburg academy, and Prof. Punnyan, of Sonora high school, all in this district, gave lectures, as did also Prof. Calkins—all relating to common school education. There was a large attendance every evening, and deep interest manifested—as was the case also during the day.

LABORS OF THE SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—I have had on hand the past year very much business relating to the alteration of school districts—considerable of it handed down to me from my predecessor. I have not visited as many schools as during the previous year; but have spent more time with those I have visited. Having had afflictions in my family, also, I have been detained at home more or less. Of course, this report must be defective, as I have not the data for many things on which the Department seeks information.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

STEPHEN VORHIS.

HAMMONDSPORT, *January 5, 1863.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

### *To the Superintendent of Public Instruction :*

The school commissioner of the second assembly district, county of Steuben, in compliance with the requirements enjoined upon him, in a circular issued by the Department of Public Instruction, respectfully submits the following briefly written report:

In this assembly district there are one hundred and seventeen school districts; one hundred and fifteen of which have had schools in operation during the present year. The average time in which school has been taught, is seven months and two days. The average attendance of persons between the ages of 4 and 21, is 80 per cent. Thirty-three districts have received *public money* sufficient to pay their teachers without incurring a rate-bill upon the patrons of the schools. In these districts the average attendance has been 84 per cent. The percentage of the remainder, in which rate-bills have been levied, is 78. In the rural districts the people meet the demands made by rate-bills cheerfully; but in the small villages they have a tendency to decrease the ratio of attendance very materially.

There are one hundred and fourteen school houses; eight of which are log structures. About one-half are nearly new; two-thirds are in good repair, and ventilated by either raising or dropping the sash. The seats are well arranged for the accommodation of the children. All are supplied with a stove; and a majority are furnished with a blackboard, teacher's desk or table, and chair; only a very few are favored with maps, charts and globe. With but few exceptions the *sites* are well chosen, but occupying very limited space, the grounds varying from the size of a *school house foundation* to a fourth of an acre; and most universally open to the *commons*, (only *three* inclosed with a fence); and about one-fourth are sadly in want of out-buildings.

The text-books in general use are Sanders' Series of Readers and Speller, Davies' and Robinson's Mathematics, Monteith's and McNally's Geographies, Brown's, Wells' and Kenyon's Grammars, Willson's History and Wright's Orthography.

The branches usually pursued are reading, spelling, writing, intellectual and practical arithmetic, geography and grammar.

The pupils generally commence their attendance at the age of five years, and end at eighteen—attending summer and winter till they are twelve years of age; and only winter terms from that age until other avocations take them from the schools.

There were employed as teachers in the schools the current year, sixty-two males and one hundred and ninety-one females. The number that make teaching a permanent employment, is eight males and fifty females. The majority of the males teach during the winter term, and the residue of the year is occupied with other employments. Wages paid to male teachers vary from \$12 to \$30 per month, averaging about \$16, exclusive of board; and females receive from \$1.50 to \$4 per week, making a general average of \$2 per week.

The patrons of the district schools are becoming more and more interested in elevating the standard of the common schools, and fully awakened to the importance of having the children educated; and the demand for competent, go-ahead teachers is rapidly increasing.

There is a teachers' institute organized and held each autumn, in this



county, at a place designated by the commissioners. The ratio of attendance from each assembly district depends materially upon the point located for the purpose; when held in this assembly district about one-half of the teachers attend, but when held in either of the other districts only about 10 per cent. are benefited by them.

At accessible points in the several towns of this district, each fall and spring, the undersigned designates a time and place for meeting applicants for licenses to teach—one day is occupied for the examination at each place of meeting. These examinations are both oral and written. Many of the teachers are found partially deficient in orthography; and very many whose knowledge of history and grammar is very circumscribed; and but a small ratio who have studied any work treating of the "theory and practice of teaching." The certificates granted annually, are usually of the second grade.

There are employed in this district, two Normal school graduates, two undergraduates, and four holding State certificates. Their success, zeal and devotion to the cause of education have a salutary influence; and they find constant employment. The demand for teachers of high qualifications is greater than the supply.

There is *one* flourishing academy connected with the free union school located at Corning. Its patronage is growing constantly. It now numbers one hundred students; ages range from 12 to 23 years, averaging about 17. The building is constructed of wood—well arranged in every particular. It has a library of 400 volumes, a philosophical and chemical apparatus, new and in good condition. The studies pursued are the common English, philosophy, physiology, chemistry, the higher mathematics, French, Latin and Greek. Tuition \$3.50 for English and 50 cents extra for each foreign language.

Salaries paid to teachers are as follows, viz: principal \$800, classical teacher \$500, preceptress \$300, and assistant \$200. The institution is supported by *its* portion of the Common School and Literature Funds and a direct tax to meet the deficiency. There has been a teachers' class connected with this academy for the past year, and it is now in operation, organized under the direction of the Regents of the University; it is apparently working well for itself and the institution, giving character to the school, bringing to it a class of pupils that come to *learn*, and are a direct honor and benefit to it, as well as an indirect medium through which they exert an influence that tends to elevate the standard of the teachers' profession.

Hereunto is attached a table showing the decrease of private schools during the last three years:

In 1860	number of schools	14.	Number of pupils in attendance	403
" 1861	" " "	9.	" " "	443
" 1862	" " "	6.	" " "	287

There is but one union free school in this district, located in the vil-

lage of Corning, and it is the largest, most successful and flourishing school in the county.

The detail of labor performed by commissioner is as follows: During the session of the summer and winter terms of school, the major part of the time is occupied in visiting schools; allotting one-half day to each visitation, and devoting five days of the week to this business—Saturday, at home attending to answering correspondence and various other matters pertaining to the office. The interim between the terms is used in meeting teachers, attending to the organization and alteration of districts, holding teachers' institutes, and in making the annual report to the Department.

Yours very obediently,

E. D. PECKHAM,

*School Commissioner.*

### THIRD DISTRICT.

The third assembly district, Steuben county, comprises eleven towns in the western part of the county. The district is very long, extending from Livingston county to Pennsylvania.

The condition of the schools varies in different parts of the district. Some of the towns have been settled longer than others, and have become more wealthy. In such towns the school districts are better organized, and the schools better sustained. There has been a disposition, in many places, to divide school districts, and those having authority in that matter have yielded until the districts have become so small that they are unable to employ the better class of teachers.

In most of the districts the attendance at school is very good. I find, however, that it is better the first part of the term than near the close.

The rate-bills, I think, keep but very few from school, being generally very low.

Quite a number of the school houses are old and inconvenient. Some, in the winter, are uncomfortable. They are all framed except five, two of which are brick, and three log. One of the log houses is being replaced by a good frame one. The citizens of Hornellsville have, during the season, built a very large brick school house, which is an ornament to the place, and reflects credit upon the public spirit of its citizens. If other districts, in proportion to their means, would do as well, the school houses would average better than at present. The sites of those school houses which have been built recently are larger and better arranged for play grounds than those of the older houses.

Most of the schools are well supplied with text books. In some, there is not the uniformity that could be desired. Sanders' Readers and Davies' Mathematics are in general use. There is quite a variety of grammars.

Algebra is studied in the more advanced schools; but in the most of them only the common branches are pursued.

I find, in nearly all the schools, some pupils that are very young. Perhaps the fact that children draw public money at the age of four years, encourages their attendance at that early age.

In respect to the wants of the schools, I would state that more thorough drilling on the part of teachers in the elementary branches, and more general interest on the part of patrons, are among the most urgent.

The proportion of male and female teachers is about four of the latter to one of the former. The wages of male teachers, in the winter, is from \$15 to \$25 per month; of females, from \$2 to \$4 per week. In summer, the schools are mostly taught by female teachers, at from \$2 to \$3 per week. The districts usually board the teachers, besides paying the above wages. The attendance of teachers, from this district, at the institute this season, was not very full. The institute was held at Bath, and most of our teachers live twenty miles or more from that place. The institute was held during the terms of the academies, so that many did not attend on that account.

In respect to my mode of examination, I would state that I usually require of teachers written examinations. I have them go through with some black-board and other oral exercises, so as to judge of their ability to teach.

Respectfully,  
RODNEY DENNIS,  
*School Commissioner.*

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### SUFFOLK COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

Sir—In compliance with the instructions of the Department, I would respectfully submit the following report:

This district, as will be seen on referring to the abstracts, is composed of the five eastern towns of the county of Suffolk, which towns are divided into sixty-two organized school districts, besides some three or four in which no public schools are maintained. No alterations have been made in the boundaries of these districts during the past year, nor have any material changes taken place in the mode of conducting the schools, with but one exception. Districts Nos. 11 and 21 of the town of Southampton, and No. 9 of the town of Easthampton, composing the village of Sag Harbor, have been consolidated—a union school organized under a special act of the Legislature, and now in successful operation. This is really a forward movement in educational matters; and it promises an important reform, in this respect, not only in the village itself, but in this part of the county generally. The school, as now organized, comprises three departments. First, the academic, under the



charge of the principal and two female assistants, with an attendance of about 75 pupils. Second, the intermediate, conducted by a male graduate of the Normal school of some years' experience, and one female assistant; and third, the primary, which is composed of two separate schools, and under the direction of the same number of female teachers—all with an attendance in the aggregate of about 400 pupils. In order that the system of schools thus inaugurated may develop its full benefits to the village, it is necessary that a building—large, commodious, and constructed with reference to the wants of such school—be erected on a site near the centre of the place. Of this the people, as well as the teachers, are well aware; and I doubt not, from the liberal and enlightened view they take of the educational interest, that it is a necessity which will not long be wanting.

Of the condition of public instruction generally in this part of the county, I wish I could report more favorably. It is far from what it should be, when we consider the means employed by the State in furnishing funds so liberally to support the schools, and facilities abundant for the preparation of teachers—by the county, in its organizations of institutes and teachers' associations.

It is difficult to account for the stolid indifference with which the public, jealous as it is in respect to other matters which concern its interests, regards the subject of popular instruction.

But there is a lighter shade to the picture. In a general survey of the schools, much may be discovered to encourage hope. Compared with the past, the present is auspicious. The teachers now employed are, in the main, better qualified. The subjects of study, and the order in which they are presented, are more in accordance with the laws which govern true mental culture. In very many instances, the topical method of conducting school recitations has taken the place of the old one by printed questions and answers. The general appearance of the school-rooms; their internal arrangements and fair supply of school apparatus; the good order maintained within, without the aid of corporal punishment, and the ample playgrounds provided—all give evidence of a deeper interest being taken in the moral and intellectual improvement of the young.

The importance of proper ventilation, once wholly neglected, now receives attention. The seats and desks are constructed more with reference to the comfort and health of the pupils. The schools are well provided with blackboards, and their appearance testifies that they are of daily use in conducting the exercises. Globes, maps and charts are very generally furnished, offering essential aid to the teacher in illustrating, and to the pupils in comprehending the subjects of study for which they are designed.

But one school house has been erected during the year within the district of my supervision, and that has been done, so far as was practi-

cable, with the modern improvements. Some of the old ones have been repaired and improved in their accommodations.

The branches of study pursued are mostly the primary. In many of the winter schools I found classes in natural philosophy, chemistry, book-keeping; and in two, Latin with the more advanced mathematics. An evil exists of pursuing too many branches at the same time, a practice which tends more to distract or confuse the learner than to develop mental power. Our teachers are too apt to labor with the old idea, that stuffing the head and loading the memory with facts, however disconnected, is educating. In witnessing the school exercises I have frequently called the attention of teachers to this evil, and have as often persuaded them to avoid it.

Our schools, like those of the more rural parts of the State generally, are made up at the different seasons with quite different materials. In the summer, we find the smaller children with a predominance of misses in attendance. The average of attendance is also much smaller, being, as near as I can judge, about three-fifths of that in the winter. The summer schools are, in a majority of the districts, continued in session a shorter time than those of the winter. The winter schools are composed more of the larger boys, ranging from twelve to eighteen years of age. They usually attend quite steadily for three or four months, while during the milder seasons they are found laboring on the farms or off on the water. This class of pupils, as might be expected, are, in the main, backward and untractable—possessing but little taste for study, they often tax alike the ingenuity and patience of the teacher.

I can hardly forbear remarking here that the character of our schools suffers much from the heterogeneous and constantly changing materials of which they are formed. A term will open with say eight or ten pupils, and these of a tender age—after the first week one and other will be dropping in until, perhaps by the fifth or sixth, the school will have arrived at its maximum attendance; the smaller children will now be leaving in consequence of the severity of the weather and their being crowded out, and will remain at home until a few of the closing weeks of the term, and by the time the term closes the school will be composed wholly of this latter class. I am now speaking of the winter schools; but the same is true, to some extent, of the summer ones. Now it will appear that with such difficulties to contend with no teacher, however well qualified, can accomplish much that will be acceptable to his employers or satisfactory to himself.

Of the teachers employed it may be said, they are of all grades of qualifications. While some are of the first class, having minds fitted both by nature and education for their calling, we have others for whom neither of these agents have done enough. It is a fact not to be disguised, that the character of our schools and the state of public instruction fall far below the standard which the educational aids afforded by the State and county, and the liberal, progressive spirit of the age

demand. And this is so more directly from the want of more teachers that are better fitted for their work. But teachers of this class cannot be employed in a great majority of the districts, from the fact that the districts are small and the people do not feel able to pay them. Here is the difficulty, and one hard to be met. Now, that our schools may be supplied with competent teachers, the business of teaching must be followed as a profession. But where is the young gentleman of requisite abilities who can afford to prepare himself for this purpose, unless he can be assured of a compensation for his services which will justify him in the cost of such preparation? If, too, as the case is in a majority of the districts, a female of moderate attainments, and at a less remuneration will answer for the summer school, how is the professional teacher then to be employed? Why, manifestly only out of his profession, which is absurd. No one can afford to qualify himself for the business of teaching unless he can be furnished with a school the greater portion of the year, and at a compensation which would remunerate the same amount of talent and preparation in the other professions.

But the plea of inability to pay first class teachers is, in a respectable portion of the district, truthfully made; for they are sparsely settled and too, by people in moderate circumstances. And in this connection I would observe, that a fruitful source of this pecuniary inability arises from a practice which obtains with the more wealthy, of sending their children to some academy or select school located within the district or near by. I have frequently noticed that the district schools in the vicinity of these higher institutions, were the poorest in almost every respect. They seem to be eclipsed—the interest is all taken from them. I think the most effectual remedy for cases of this kind, would be the enactment of a law appropriating the public moneys according to the ratio of attendance, rather than the basis of population. I would not be understood as decrying these high schools. A certain number of them is necessary to meet the public want. To them it belongs to take the graduate from the common school, and fit him for a yet higher institution. It is from their midst that we are to look for teachers for the common school; but in answering these ends they need not encroach upon, or exert an influence detrimental to the common school.

We have, located in this part of the country, five academies, besides the academic department of the union school at Sag Harbor. These schools are taught by graduates of colleges; some with one, and one, I think, with two female assistants. The attendance ranges from 30 to 90 pupils. Two of these schools are tolerably furnished, with philosophic apparatus, but the libraries are inferior. In two of these academies, teachers' classes have been instructed during my term of office, and they both bore a good examination. I might add here, that the teachers of these high schools do not interest themselves much in educational matters beyond the sphere of their own institutions. They do not identify themselves with the educational movements of the county—



seldom attending to the institutes or teachers' associations—or fraternizing, to the extent that could be wished, with the teachers of the common school.

The district libraries, I am sorry to say, do not receive the attention they merit. In most of the districts the books are kept in the school room, in cases often without lock, and hence of constant access to the pupils. I frequently notice the books lying promiscuously about the room, minus covers, and much torn. Nor are these books read as much as they were formerly, either by the children or parents. From six districts, as the abstract will show, no report of the number of volumes was made. I think, on the whole, it would be a much more economical arrangement if the money now used to augment the number of these volumes, could be appropriated to the purchase of school apparatus, or text books for indigent children, or for the payment of teachers' wages.

In about two-thirds of the districts, the former method of keeping three trustees in office is still adhered to.

As to the number of districts in which the trustees have complied with the requirements of the law, in furnishing a blank book for keeping a record of the finances, &c., I cannot speak with any degree of accuracy. In by far the greater portion of the schools I find a permanent school register of prescribed form, for the use of the teacher; they appear to be well kept and carefully handled. I would notice here, that the reports of the trustees made this year are filled out very accurately, and bear a neater and more business-like appearance than those of last year. I found only three errors to correct.

An association of the teachers of the county continue to hold their regular semi-annual sessions, and these meetings are well attended. The exercises are carried on mainly by the older and more experienced members; but every teacher, however small his attainments, is permitted and even solicited to engage in them. While these gatherings are highly beneficial to the teacher in awakening his ambition and inspiring him with fresh zeal, they also serve to keep alive among the people a spirit of progress and enlarged desires for a more elevated standard of public instruction. These exercises consist in discussing questions pertaining to educational matters—in reading essays prepared for the occasion, and in explaining, by some member, to a class selected from the association, but in the presence of all, some principle or topic of study, after the manner of a school recitation. At the evening sessions the people of the neighborhood usually congregate in large numbers to witness the exercises, and listen to a lecture from some professional educator from abroad.

A teachers' institute was held in the court house in Riverhead, commencing on the 13th of October and continuing in session through the week. Owing to reasons beyond the control of the commissioners, it was not thought expedient to hold it any longer. Prof. N. A. Calkins, of New York city, officiated as principal instructor, assisted by Mr. A. G.

Merwin, of Port Jefferson. Lectures having a bearing on the subject of education were given severally by Prof. Calkins, Hon. F. W. Ricord, State Superintendent of New Jersey, and Prof. J. F. Stoddard, of New York city. The weather was pleasant, the attendance good, and the results were highly satisfactory, both to the teachers and the commissioners. For a more detailed account of the labor accomplished, and the impetus given to the cause of education, I would refer you to the report of my colleague, Commissioner Nicoll, of the second district—a school officer to whose large experience, untiring zeal, and unceasing efforts we are greatly indebted for the improved condition of our schools, and the respectable position our county holds, in this regard, among the sister counties of the State.

Finally, I would state, in reference to my own labors, that I have visited all the schools under my supervision once during the past year—a great portion of them twice, and some three times. The winter schools, being the larger—receiving the most of the public money, and sharing to a greater extent the sympathy of the people—have received the greater portion of these visits. And to have these provided with able teachers, such as realize the responsibility of their office, and look upon the pecuniary compensation they receive as a secondary consideration, compared with the consciousness of having well done their work and the happy results to follow—this has been my high aim, and the end to which my best efforts have been directed.

I have, during the year, granted certificates of qualification to 89 candidates—6 of the first grade, 53 of the second, and 30 of the third. To 8, certificates have been refused for incompetency.

In conducting school examinations, it has been my plan to let the teacher pursue that course which, in his or her opinion, was best calculated to show the condition of the school—varying the exercises as little as possible from the usual routine. This method has given me, at the same time, an opportunity to judge of the qualifications of the teacher, especially of his *aptness* to teach.

I have made it a point to confer with trustees and school officers whenever opportunity offered, and to co-operate with them in any measure having for its end the advancement of the cause of popular education. So far as was practicable, I have been present at the institute, the teachers' associations, and school meetings, and have endeavored, by my presence and humble efforts, to aid the cause which looks forward with hope to the rising generation, and sees in it a state of society more elevated in point of intellectual capacity and moral culture—a cause worthy of the good wishes and best efforts of every friend of humanity.

Respectfully submitted.

E. JONES LUDLOW,

*School Commissioner.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

HUNTINGTON, SUFFOLK COUNTY, *December 1, 1862.*To Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Pub. Instruction :*

In compliance with the directions contained in your circular of August 27th, 1862, the undersigned, school commissioner for the western district of Suffolk county, begs leave respectfully to submit the following report:

The attendance upon the common schools of this district cannot be accurately determined. Quite a large number of the school houses are not supplied with the proper register in which the daily attendance of pupils can be correctly noted; while in others, so supplied, the necessary care and labor, which should be exercised in properly transcribing them, are not found in the trustees, whose duty it is to perform that important work. Hence, the plan of guessing at the attendance prevails too generally to make any reliance upon trustees' reports advisable. I presume, however, from observation and inquiry in districts with which I am personally familiar, that the average of those who attend, for a portion of the year, upon the common schools, will not vary much from one-half of those enumerated as of school age. This result may be traced to the fact that children between four and five years of age are seldom sent to school, while those who have attained the age of fifteen or sixteen are kept at home to assist in the labors and occupations of their parents. In some neighborhoods, too, local prejudices prevail against the common school, and in favor of some "select" institution; while in others, the apathy of parents to the intellectual and moral culture of their offspring is such as to dishearten any teacher, and discourage all efforts in their behalf.

It is questionable whether the getting rid of rate-bills, and the introduction of free schools, would favorably affect the average of attendance. The families of indigent persons are now cheerfully exempted by the action of trustees, and complaints are rarely made of a free exercise of the discretionary power in this respect, which the statute confers upon them.

In no way is the educational improvement, which has taken place in this district within the few years past, more marked than in the character and condition of its school houses, their sites and out-buildings, their furniture, and the modes in which they are warmed and ventilated. The old and time-worn structures of a former generation have either given place entirely to new and commodious buildings, or have been so remodeled as to be suitable for the purpose to which they are applied. The ancient open, wide-mouthed fire-places, before which the smaller pupils were roasted alive, while those at a distant part of the room were chilled with cold, have been superseded by modern stoves, burning either coal or wood, or by furnaces in the basement, with registers in floors above. Proper ventilation is secured by hanging the upper and lower window sashes, and the introduction of the most approved patent venti-



tators through the roofs of the buildings. The backless benches and continuous desks, which "ran around the room," have been permitted to run out of doors, and been replaced by modern school furniture, properly graded to the age and size of pupils. Outbuildings, securing privacy and convenience to persons of either sex, have been erected, and are kept in order by careful supervision of the teacher. Maps, globes, outline maps, and a fair supply of geographical and mathematical apparatus, are found in nearly every school room.

The sessions of teachers' institutes and associations, subjecting all who participate in them to a uniform and similar mode of instruction, have resulted in the introduction of a uniform system of text books, and of similar methods of imparting knowledge, while at the same time they have enabled our teachers to present new branches of study in a philosophical manner, at once attractive and beneficial to the pupil. To do this, we have found it necessary, as far as practicable, to dispense with the question and answer method, and to introduce the topical system of recitation. Charts and diagrams, with models and pictures, are found most effective in exciting the attention of the pupil, while the arrangement of each study, in its natural order, tends to aid the memory and stimulate inquiry. The teacher's rule of action is, "divide and define;" that of the pupil, "observe and investigate." In this connection, I cannot but express much regret that the fact that the majority of our children attend school at all only from the age of five to that of fourteen or fifteen years, and during much of that period only for a few of the winter months, has made it necessary, and expedient, indeed, for the teacher to dispense with any systematic method of imparting instruction, and to direct his efforts to doing only what the urgent circumstances of the pupil seem to indicate as most applicable to his individual case. What we lack most is not energy and enthusiasm in our teachers, but a healthy condition of public sentiment, which may induce parents to set aside at least a few years of the child's life to the continuous and rigorous acquisition of knowledge. It is this incessant halting on the part of the pupil—this repeated going back to begin again—this coming to school one day in the week, which does more to dwarf the intellect, to inculcate careless and shiftless habits of business, to impress the child with the insignificant value of education as compared with the importance of manual labor, than all the precepts and all the examples of the best teachers in the world are powerful to counteract. While in the progress of our schools I see much to encourage, and nothing which should dishearten, I cannot but be sensible that the only remedy for the evils above enumerated is in an earnest and life-long devotion, on the part of educators, to the thorough prosecution of their work. The energetic school officer and the devoted teacher secure at once the confidence of the most thoughtless parent, and the respect of the reckless one. Gentle expostulation, if well-timed, may influence both; while legislation, or anything which savors of compulsion, will render both more determined and

obstinate, in exact proportion to their original thoughtlessness, recklessness and ignorance.

The proportion of female to male teachers in this district, as shown in my statistical report for the current year, is as two to one. This proportion has for several years past been gradually and regularly increasing, and bids fair in time to put all our schools, especially those in districts strictly rural, into the hands of the gentler sex. This change is mainly attributable to the fact that females devote themselves more strictly and faithfully to the work of preparation for teaching—regarding it as a principal and not a secondary employment—pursue it with more energy and assiduity, are consequently more successful in their efforts when properly sustained and appreciated, and are content with a smaller rate of compensation. Male teachers usually get about thirty dollars a month, exclusive of board; while females of similar capacity and equally well qualified are content with twenty dollars. A class of third grade female teachers, who are principally employed during the summer terms, and as assistants in our graded schools, receive on the average fifteen dollars per month. These are not often employed during the winter, but devote that time to attending school and preparatory study. About two-thirds of the teachers of this district attend the sessions of the institute and association, in the same proportion of two females to one male, and representing all the grades from the highest to the lowest. These grades are now determined by examinations, which are held in April and September of each year. Appointments extending over two weeks are fully advertised for a month previous in the county newspapers, made at certain designated school houses, at each of which all the teachers of the neighborhood desiring examination are duly assembled. Printed copies of questions on the different branches of study are carefully prepared and duly submitted to the candidates, who are required to write out the answers upon sheets of blank paper, in a certain time, without consulting text-books, and without communication with each other. Questions not correctly answered, or not answered at all in the time allowed, are counted as failures. Three hours are usually allotted to this kind of exercise, and one hour to an oral examination into methods and principles of teaching. Fifty per cent. of correct answers, in each branch of study, is required to enable the applicant to hold a license of the lowest grade; seventy-five per cent. for the second grade; while certificates of the first grade are only given when all the answers are correct, and the candidate has exhibited afterwards in the school-room his ability to instruct, govern, and direct a school satisfactorily. While I confess that the most careful and thorough examination, either written or oral, will not always bring out the desired result, and determine who are and who are not teachers, it yet seems to me much more fair and equal than any other. In the first place it subjects all the teachers of a district to the same series of questions, which, of course, are renewed each spring and fall; it economizes time and labor on the

part of the examining officer; it avoids the Scylla of excessive blandness and partiality of the well fed and warmed school commissioner of to-day, and the Charybdis of acerbity and "bearishness" of the same dignity, suffering to-morrow from an ill-digested dinner. As long as physiologists agree that the condition of the mind is dependent upon the tone of the stomach, it were well as far as possible to avoid these calamities by a prudent preparation beforehand.

It is difficult to say what branches of study our teachers exhibit the greatest ability to teach. They are usually best prepared for examination upon arithmetic, from the fact that they imagine that they will find this the most difficult of any, and hence devote more time to its preparation. Their knowledge of arithmetic, or the want of it rather, will be the test of their acceptability to the patrons of the schools where they may seek employment. Very few of our teachers have set apart any time to the study of the "Theory and Practice of Teaching," although works of this character are generally found in our district libraries, and as generally read. Instruction upon this subject has been given, in the most thorough manner, in our institutes for the past six or seven years; and as each person attending was required to take full notes of all that was said, those notes furnish now a valuable source of reference to those who desire to pursue their investigations into this department of professional knowledge.

The supply of teachers of a high grade is fully equal to the demand, which is not so large as would be desirable. At least one-half of all the certificates granted annually are of this grade; while, of the one hundred and fifty-one teachers who have been employed during the past year, we include ten who hold the license of the State Superintendent, and three who are graduates of the Normal school. Some six or seven of the undergraduates of the same institution are also employed, and all are to be commended for their intelligence, energy and zeal in the prosecution of their adopted calling.

Our district can boast of but one academy, located at Millersplace, in the town of Brookhaven. It has failed to be a paying investment for the trustees, and has been much neglected of late years. During the winter season a school is maintained in it, but never of such a kind as to exert any perceptible influence upon the state of education in that neighborhood. The number of pupils taught is usually about fifteen; at what charges for tuition, and with what success to those who attend, it is impossible for me to say.

Of private schools—or as they are generally called "select schools"—we are blessed with an abundance, and with fair prospects of increase in the future. Thirty-five are reported in my last abstract, with an attendance of nearly six hundred pupils. They are the result of the disappointment which is occasionally experienced by those who vainly apply for certificates to teach district schools; and as their founders have little capital invested—usually less than is required for a third-grade



license—their success or failure is a matter of very trifling importance to communities in which they are established.

Although we have some two or three clergymen who devote a portion of their leisure time to imparting instruction, we have no parochial schools in the strict meaning of the term. Of colored schools we have two; one located at Amityville and one at Huntington. Both are under the control and direction of the board of trustees of the district school. The one at Amityville has an average of twenty-five pupils, and is taught for six months in each year by a colored teacher, duly qualified with a certificate of the third grade. The amount of public money drawn by the colored children of school age is apportioned by the trustees to this school, and the balance of teachers' wages is made up by private contributions from Quakers and others interested in the education of this class of children. At Huntington, a special department of the union school is set apart for colored pupils, and a properly qualified teacher assigned to it by the board of education at a salary of two hundred dollars per annum. About thirty of these pupils regularly attend this school.

We have in this district no union free school organized under the act of 1853. The union school at Huntington was organized in 1858, under a special act of incorporation, and is not entirely free—a small charge in each term being made for tuition to each pupil attending. This institution has flourished beyond the expectations of its most sanguine friends; and under the act of April, 1862, admitting such union schools to a participation in the funds of the Board of Regents, and to their supervision, it promises to be of essential service in the preparation of a class of teachers for successful employment in our rural schools.

The condition of district school libraries is, in a majority of cases, becoming worse every year. The number of volumes reported in such libraries for 1862 was 12,037; for 1861, 12,310; for 1860, 11,322, and for 1859, 12,579. These figures do not so much indicate a falling off in the number of volumes, as they do a want of care and investigation, on the part of trustees, into the actually existing number. Many of the books are old and worn out; not from study and use, but from improper handling and neglect. Purchases made each year are generally of books not at all suited to the purpose for which the appropriation was intended; and inasmuch as they fail to suit the popular taste, they are neglected, and seldom read. Book agents travel through the county with such an assortment as *they* think best, and trustees quietly acquiesce in the selection which they see fit to make. Very few families being without a daily or weekly paper, and the news of the day being the most attractive reading which can well be presented, the demand for school libraries may be considered as past, and the era of their usefulness at an end; yet, in districts where the amount of money apportioned is considerable, and due care is exercised in the purchase of standard works of acknow-

ledged literary merit, the library still forms a valuable accompaniment to the school, and a useful feature in our common school system.

At the election which occurred in October, 1858, after the passage of the act to reduce the number of trustees, a large majority of the districts elected but one trustee. Since that time the same districts have gradually crept back to the old number, and but four or five of the strictly rural districts are willing to abide the "one man power;" and of the eighty-eight districts under my supervision, about sixty are governed by three trustees, and these are usually the smaller and feebler ones. This result is mainly attributable to local and peculiar causes—such as private jealousy, and the fear of conferring too much power upon a single individual. About one in ten of these boards of trustees have complied with the directions of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction, and furnished their school houses with proper registers and suitable blank books.

The last teachers' institute of this county was held at Riverhead, the county seat. The session commenced on the 13th of October, and continued until the afternoon of the 18th. Prof. N. A. Calkins, of New York city, and Mr. A. G. Merwin, of Port Jefferson, were employed as instructors, the former acting as principal conductor, and giving lessons upon arithmetic, reading, geography, spelling and object teaching—the latter confining himself entirely to language. Prof. Stoddard, of New York city, delivered one evening lecture, and spent one-half day in giving instruction upon advanced arithmetic and higher mathematics. Hon. Mr. Ricord, State Superintendent, of the State of New Jersey, delivered one evening lecture. Eighty-seven teachers were in attendance, and exhibited marked interest in the various exercises and lectures. The people of the county continue, as in former years, to show a decided partiality for these lectures, and a proper preference for the employment of teachers who participate in the instructions given.

For the detail of labors performed by the school commissioner in discharge of duties, I can simply refer you to my abstract, which was duly forwarded to you. I have endeavored to visit all the schools under my supervision, at least twice in each year. Sometimes when the school was in session but six months, I have been unable to do so. I believe, however, that in the matter of visitation, I have done as much as time would allow, or as much as the necessities of the several districts made imperative. I have also devoted, as before shown, two weeks in April, and two in October to the examination of teachers, and have endeavored at all times and in all places, to carry out to the best of my ability the wishes of the Department, and to promote sound education, elevate the character and qualifications of teachers, improve the means of instruction, and advance the interests of the schools in my charge.

All of which is respectfully submitted, while I remain sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM NICOLL, *School Commissioner.*

## SULLIVAN COUNTY.

Special report of Sullivan county, for the year ending September 30, 1862 :

ATTENDANCE.—Eight persons of school age, out of every fifteen, attend school a part of the year.

RATE-BILLS.—Public sentiment is opposed to rate-bills, and is in favor of a school fund large enough to defray all expenses of schools.

HOUSES, &c.—The school houses are generally too small, the rooms low, and can be ventilated only by opening doors or raising windows. Great destitution of out-buildings.

APPARATUS.—But few schools have even a small globe; some only one or two little black-boards.

STUDIES.—The studies pursued are spelling, reading, arithmetic, geography, grammar, penmanship, and history of the United States.

TEXT BOOKS.—Many kinds; too great a variety in the same school. Public sentiment is in favor of a well selected set of the same kind for all the schools.

WANTS.—Better houses, seats, desks, and means of ventilation; a greater sameness of text books, live teachers, and more liberal patrons.

TEACHERS.—Three females to one male are employed in the schools. One-half of the former follow it as a permanent employment; not one-tenth of the latter can; they cannot compete with the low-prices of the other sex. The wages of males are from \$15 to \$35 per month; of females, from \$7 to \$20 per month. Not one in three of either sex attend the institutes. Few have studied any work treating on the theory and practice of teaching. I have given about an equal number of second and third-grade licenses. Teachers of high qualifications too seldom demanded; low-priced ones, with too low qualifications for teachers, are in great demand, but not needed.

ACADEMIES.—The Liberty Normal Institute, and Monticello Academy. Members of teachers' classes seldom fail in their efforts as teachers. I think the benefit of teachers' classes very decided.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—There are 18 private schools in this district; the number of pupils in attendance is 347.

LIBRARIES.—The libraries are in bad condition; books not well selected, and little read. The library money is generally paid to teachers.

TRUSTEES.—The people are in favor of three trustees. Nearly every district has complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

No institute has been held since October, 1861.

ALBERT STAGE,  
*School Commissioner.*



## TOMPKINS COUNTY.

ITHACA, December 29, 1862.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction* :

Sir—In compliance with your instructions, I send you the following report :

I have no means of ascertaining the proportion of those of school age who attend the schools. The schedule of attendance made out by trustees, I find in very many instances to be mere guess work ; and in many cases no schedule is prepared.

I might, however, say that the attendance is quite general; very few, if any, are deterred by the rate-bill, for there prevails an enlightened public sentiment in favor of exempting those who are legitimate objects of exemption ; and in almost all cases the rate-bill is so light that little or no opposition is manifested to it.

The provisions for instruction in this county are now so ample, that none need be deprived of the privilege of acquiring a good common school education.

**SCHOOL HOUSES.**—We have many elegant and commodious school houses, conveniently seated and ventilated, and furnished with blackboards, maps, charts, globes, &c., and ample play grounds; some of these are tastefully ornamented with trees and shrubbery, and also furnished with suitable out-buildings. But we have a few of those way-side nuisances in the last stages of dilapidation, which remind us that a little of the semi-barbarous age clings even to the last half of the nineteenth century. But dirt and rust, Old Father Time and Young America's jack-knife will bring them down, to be replaced, we hope, with structures more in consonance with the generous and enlightened spirit of the age.

Some of the houses are ventilated by modern ventilators in the ceiling, the majority by the windows being let down from the top, a few by broken clapboards and holes in the wall. They are warmed by stoves, wood being used as fuel.

**TEXT BOOKS.**—Wright's Orthography, Sanders' Readers and Spellers, Parker & Watson's Readers, Town's Analysis, Sanders' Analysis, Colton & Fitch's Geographies, Thomson's Arithmetics, Davies' Arithmetics, Robinson's Algebras, Brown's Grammar, Clark's Grammar.

The branches of study most generally pursued, are orthography and reading writing, composition, geography, arithmetic, grammar and algebra.

The pupils commence going to school at the age of five or six, and sometimes, if the parents are very anxious to get them out of the way, they are sent younger. They generally attend winter and summer until they are about twelve years of age, and then only winters until they are seventeen or eighteen, at which age most of the pupils quit the common schools.

**GENERAL PROGRESS.**—Through the influence of teachers' institutes,

teachers' class, and a more thorough system of supervision, and a uniformity of text-books having been secured, more system and order have been introduced into the schools, and they are consequently making rapid progress.

**MOST URGENT WANTS.**—The most urgent wants of the schools are maps, globes, charts, and apparatus, by which to illustrate and enforce the principles of the sciences taught. The most urgent want of teachers is a more thorough knowledge of the *science of teaching*; and if some uniform system of conducting teachers' institutes was adopted, and thoroughly competent teachers furnished by the Department to manage them, and their attendance at the institute or a teachers' class made a prerequisite for a teacher's license, it would give our schools an immense impetus.

**TEACHERS.**—The proportion of male and female teachers is about one to three. There being so few large schools in our county, only about ten or twelve male teachers are permanently employed. About one-half of the females, and one-tenth of the males follow teaching as a permanent employment. Of the males who follow it as a temporary employment, a portion teach from one to three terms, and many more teach during the winter and work on farms during the summer. The females devote from one to twenty years to the profession, or until a good offer presents itself to manage a *private school*.

The wages of males in the rural districts range from twelve to twenty-five dollars a month, and board; and in a few of the larger schools thirty to thirty-five dollars. The wages of females from one and a half to three dollars a week for the summer term, and from two to four dollars (and board), for the winter term.

About one-half of our teachers attend regularly the teachers' institutes and associations.

I examine teachers in orthography, reading, grammar, composition, analysis of the English language, arithmetic (mental and written), geography, &c. A part of the examination is written, and a part oral. At each examination I call attention to some needed improvement, and at each succeeding examination insist upon a higher grade of scholarship and greater proficiency. I find the deficiencies not so much in knowledge of the text-books as in the science of teaching.

**GRADES OF CERTIFICATES.**—I have been very cautious in granting certificates of the first grade—only about one in twenty, three-fourths of the second grade, and the rest of the third grade. There being so few large schools in our county, we have but little benefit from the labors of Normal scholars, as they engage elsewhere in more permanent situations.

**ITHACA ACADEMY.**—The building is of brick, three stories high, 40 by 60 feet, with a wing of wood 30 by 60 feet, two stories, and is in excellent repair. The average number of students for the year was one hundred and fifty-eight. The library consists of 462 volumes, and the apparatus and cabinet are valued at \$900.

**STUDIES.**—Greek, Latin, German and French languages; Sciences—Philosophy, chemistry, geology, physiology, physical geography, botany, geography; Mathematics—Arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, surveying; English Language—Grammar, rhetoric, English history, U. S. history.

**WAGES OF TEACHERS.**—Principal, \$1,000; mathematical teacher, \$450 to \$500; Preceptress, \$350; assistant preceptress, \$252.

**SOURCES OF SUPPORT.**—Tuition bills, share of Literature Fund, interest of a permanent fund of \$4,000. Rates of tuition, \$4 to \$6 the term of 14 weeks—music extra, \$10.

**TRUMANSBURGH ACADEMY.**—The number of students, is 77; the value of the lot and building, is \$4,325; the value of the library, consisting of 262 volumes, is \$281; the value of the apparatus, is \$593.

All the common and higher English branches usually pursued, including surveying and engineering, Latin, Greek, French, music, painting, drawing, &c., are here taught.

The only revenue is tuition, and appropriation from the Literature Fund. Tuition from \$4 to \$6. Salaries of four teachers, (two part of the time,) \$1,200.

**GROTON ACADEMY.**—Pupils in attendance, 151; average age, 17—but few less than twelve; value of lot and buildings, \$5,800; of library, \$500; apparatus, \$450. The branches taught are those usually taught in other academies. Wages paid teachers, \$1,400. Supported by tuition from pupils and amount received from Literature Fund. Rates of tuition, \$3, \$5 and \$6 per term.

The instruction of teachers' classes in our academies is accomplishing much good in elevating the standard of qualifications.

The number of private schools is 13; pupils in attendance, 345.

**DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.**—Two-thirds of the districts now devote the library money to the payment of teachers' wages. The libraries are decidedly neglected.

Private libraries, periodicals and newspapers have very nearly superseded school district libraries.

About one-fourth of the districts have adopted the one trustee system; many adhere to the old system, because of its antiquity. About one-third have complied with No. 116 Code of Public Instruction; much trouble and confusion are experienced in consequence of non-compliance.

**TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.**—The last institute held in our county, commenced at Ithaca, October 13th, and continued two weeks. The exercises were conducted by Rev. George Kerr, LL. D., Watertown, N. Y.; Prof. M. R. Barnard, Ithaca, N. Y.; Prof. S. G. Williams, Ithaca, N. Y.; Prof. D. W. Fish, Rochester, N. Y.; Profs. McBride and Knettlles, Dryden, N. Y.

Instruction was given in orthography, reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, geography, algebra, object lessons, "Theory and Practice of Teaching," &c.



Lectures were delivered by Dr. Kerr on "Astronomy;" "The Teacher and his Qualifications;" "The Work of the Teacher;" by Dr. Parker on "Anatomy, Physiology, Hygiene, &c.;" by Prof. M. R. Barnard, "The Materials to Work Upon, and the Means of Accomplishing this Work;" M. R. Barnard on "Object Teaching;" Rev. D. Lorry, Ithaca, on "The Importance of Teaching as a Profession;" Miss Nivison, M. D., Dryden, N. Y., "Woman and her Education;" Emerson W. Keyes, Esq., "Life in Education, and Education in Life."

The number of teachers in attendance, 153. A very lively interest was manifested in the exercises, not only by the teachers, but by the public generally; and it is generally conceded that it was one of the most interesting and profitable sessions ever held in the county.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—The details of labors performed, as you are aware, are numerous. The school commissioner is emphatically the servant of the people. Their demands upon his time are constant. My district being one of the largest in the State—nearly double the average size—I find it impossible, in addition to the work inseparably connected with the office, to visit the schools as often as I could wish. I endeavor, therefore, to promptly attend to all the official business connected with the office, and spend the remaining portion of my time in visiting those teachers and schools most needing my personal attention.

And, in conclusion, I know that our schools are making commendable progress in system, order, thoroughness, and proficiency in attainments in all the essentials of a common school education.

I am sir, yours, &c.,

J. D. THATCHER,

*School Commissioner.*

## ULSTER COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

To Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. Public Instruction* :

The undersigned, school commissioner for the first district of Ulster county, begs leave to report as follows:

In relation to common schools within my district, I can say as to the attendance of persons of school age: in some places the people appreciate instruction, and are willing to pay a reasonable rate-bill to sustain a good school; in others, where they do not have the same appreciation of educational facilities, they keep their children at home, rather than be taxed with a rate-bill; whilst in other places, again, they employ teachers at low wages, and only apply the public money, and in such cases the attendance will be larger. I think the people are ready to try a judicious system of free schools. And I think, also, this would result in offering better wages, and thereby call out better talent in the teachers' profession.

As to the provisions for the instruction of pupils, I have only to say that these are in accordance with the qualifications of the teachers. I

find where teachers are up to the progressive spirit of the age, they soon inspire their pupils and employers with the same spirit, and then the people are willing to furnish all necessary appliances for teaching.

**SCHOOL HOUSES.**—A large majority of these are good, and many of them new, and well arranged as to furniture, ventilation, &c.

**SCHOOL APPARATUS** is not much used in many of our schools. Many of them have not even a globe; and where they have them, in many cases they are not much used. The branches of study are the ordinary common school branches. In a very few cases some of the higher studies are pursued.

Some parents send their children to school at a very early age, sometimes before they have reached the age of four years; and many of them leave at the age of fourteen, and even younger. Many are allowed to attend school but a part of the year. I am well satisfied that if there was no rate-bill to pay, the children that most need schooling would attend more regularly.

There is a manifest desire for the improvement of the schools, and I think that an active working commissioner can easily make great improvement. But I shall have more to say about this under its appropriate head. I think the most urgent want of our common schools is well trained, energetic teachers.

**TEACHERS**—In my district there are now employed 61 teachers, of whom 23 are males, and 38 females. Of these, perhaps one-third follow it as a permanent business, and the remainder as a temporary employment, merely to fill up a few months in the winter, or as a means of getting funds to enable them to prepare for some other profession. As to wages they are shamefully low, as you can easily see by the abstract accompanying this. The attendance at the institute this year was a great improvement on last year, and the largest that has ever yet been in this county. I examine the teachers in their knowledge of the branches they are required to teach, and their mode of presenting them to the pupils. The certificates I have granted have been of the second and third grades. I have granted but three of the first grade. There is not as great demand for teachers of high qualifications as might be supposed, in a section of country like this. I know of but three Normal school graduates in my district who are teaching, and two undergraduates. Four of these succeed very well; one of them does not. They are not in greater demand than other teachers.

**ACADEMIES.**—There are two in my district; number of pupils, 150. Buildings good; libraries quite extensive; chemical and philosophical apparatus not very extensive. Studies: common English, with higher mathematics, Greek, Latin, French, and the sciences. Wages paid to teachers, they declined to state.

**PRIVATE SCHOOLS.**—These have diminished during the year. Our public schools are improving so much that the attendance at private schools decreases.

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.—These exist only among the Catholics. The attendance is quite large, but very many of the Catholic children attend our public schools.

SCHOOLS FOR COLORED CHILDREN.—There are none in my district.

UNION FREE SCHOOLS.—There are two in my district, and both located in Kingston. They are the best schools in the district. The people support them well after they get started.

DISTRICT LIBRARIES.—Some of these are not in very good condition. The books composing them generally are histories, biographies, travels, &c. The people do not think much of them. They would rather expend the money for teachers' wages. Books are so plenty now that almost every family manages to get what books they want to read.

As to newspapers, &c., we have a supply sufficiently large, but they are not of a very high character. They are quite generally read. Private libraries are becoming more numerous.

TRUSTEES.—Proportion of districts having but one, one-fifth. I think the people generally prefer three.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.—We held an institute last month, closing on the 31st. It continued eleven days. The persons employed as instructors were as follows, viz: James Cruikshank, LL. D., Conductor. Lecturers: J. F. Stoddard, "Mental Development;" T. S. Lambert, M. D., "Physiology;" S. B. Woolworth, LL. D. "How can I become a successful teacher?" The instruction given, was in the branches taught in our common schools. The number of teachers in attendance was one hundred and forty, the largest that has yet been in this county. The interest manifested by the public was plainly seen by the large attendance during the evening sessions. The crowd was so great that many could not get in. Many came in also in the daily sessions.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—This office is one of the most important in the State, and the right kind of an incumbent can make it popular with our citizens. The labors I have performed have been, examining teachers, visiting schools, attending school examinations, talking with trustees about school houses and the interests of their schools in general, writing for the papers, trying to urge an increased interest in school matters; and in places where the population is more dense, I have tried to persuade them to establish graded schools. I have also sought to bring before the teachers in the schools, the importance of teaching according to the object system.

I have served but ten months, having been appointed *vice* James Sharp, resigned, and have been busy nearly the whole time, and just got some plans laid, and teachers had begun to wake up a little, with a fair prospect for progressive movements, when my term expired by the election of my successor.

As to the interests of education in Ulster county, and the efficiency of commissioners and teachers, I refer you to Dr. Cruikshank. He has con-



ducted two sessions of our institute, and can give you some information on these subjects.

All this is most respectfully submitted.

A. E. SCHEPMOES,  
*School Commissioner.*

KINGSTON, *November 18th, 1862.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

STONE RIDGE, *December 1, 1862.*

To the Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Supt. Public Instruction:*

Dear Sir—Although the war has called away some of the best professional teachers in this assembly district, and drawn heavily on its pecuniary resources, there has yet been an increase of interest, and a corresponding progress in the common schools under my jurisdiction. The aggregate time taught is thirteen months less than it was last year, yet the sum paid for teachers' wages is three hundred dollars more than it was the preceding year. This is owing to the more steady employment of professional teachers, and consequently of males of that class, at advanced wages, which I have not failed to urge in all the ways consistent with the nature of my office.

The lack of professional teachers is the great drag on the common schools in this locality, and will be until the people learn to offer greater inducements for male labor. Women, by their position as such, are merely transient teachers, and must continue to be such.

There are other objections to such a preponderance of female over male teachers, among which a practical finish to the education of youth is the most weighty.

About two-thirds of the children of school age attend school in this district. It is my conviction that the attendance would be greater and more constant, were the schools entirely free, for not a few parents are too proud to send and not pay, and too poor to send and pay; they therefore keep their children at home. Trustees usually collect a rate-bill from all whom they can induce to pay, which can but diminish the attendance.

I notice an increasing objection on the part of teachers to the attendance of children in extreme youth, yet not a few parents send their children to school as a matter of convenience. I generally recommend teachers to request a nurse from the latter, or to urge that they be kept at home, to which I hope you will give a silent approval.

The school houses are generally one story frame buildings, with ample accommodations for seats, but want ventilation. Many of them have blackboards so small that they are not of utility, while nearly all are without globes, maps, blocks, cards, or other apparatus.

The average pay to male teachers is about twenty-seven dollars, and to females fifteen. But few of the teachers have ever read any work on

the theory and practice of teaching ; but I have enjoined it on them as a duty, and with great effect. The greater share of certificates are of the third and second grades. Thirty per cent. of the teachers now in commission, hold certificates of the first grade.

Three undergraduates of the Normal school are engaged at present in this district. They are quite successful, and are in demand.

There is but one parochial school, and that has from forty to fifty pupils; but we have eleven "select schools," with as many teachers, and an aggregate attendance of three hundred and forty-one—two less than last year.

There is one academy within my jurisdiction, but this is in a sickly condition. The people in the vicinity paid the back salary last year by means of a "shilling party." It does not amount to much, and has no teachers' class.

There is a school in the town of New Paltz for the education of the county paupers, under the supervision of the superintendent of the poor, and taught by a superannuated, drunken pauper. There are from twenty to thirty children in it. This, bad as it is, is more than our county could boast of for nearly two years prior to 1862.

The district libraries are in a better condition than they were last year, owing to a strict examination into their contents and state of preservation; but they are yet in a lamentable state. Here and there, there is one appreciated and used, as all were twenty years ago; but the greater share are stored in garrets, or old closets, dusty, musty, if not mouse eaten. Papers and periodicals have usurped their place. People tell me they have no time to read books. This is to be regretted; for they who trust to such sources for knowledge will always be *superficial*. But on this, as on some other subjects, I will report further when the statistics, now in course of collection, are obtained.

The commissioner for the first district has reported the details of the last institute, and it is sufficient for me to say that it was the largest ever held in the county. There were one hundred and forty-five teachers in attendance, of whom seventy were from my district—almost one-half, although we are but one-third of the county. I am justly proud of it.

About one out of three districts have one trustee. Almost all have complied with No. 116 of the Code.

But although this has been done, it has not prevented confusion and rascality in district affairs. It gives me pain to report that districts are in confusion and discord through embezzlement of both library and school funds. In such cases, although every one in the neighborhood feels aggrieved, no one takes steps to secure their rights, illustrating the old adage: "What is everybody's business nobody attends to." I think it would be in the interest of education, if the commissioner had power to bring the trustees to account, and to punish for neglect of duty. I suggest the payment of three dollars for the last offense, into the school

fund. I actually had to ride around this fall to coax some of the trustees to report.

I have made one hundred and forty-five visitations within the last year—surely not as many as I would like to have made, but more than the salary warrants. My expense on the road is about one dollar and a half per day, without horse hire. The salary of the school commissioner is far too small. We propose holding the next institute in July next, and hope to have your company. I have the trustees and teachers engaged in collecting for me some curious and valuable statistics, which I will communicate as soon as collected.

Your obedient servant,

JON. W. HASBROUCK,

*School Commissioner.*

### THIRD DISTRICT.

The geography of this district is no inapt type of its educational condition. By reference to its map you will discover that it is little else than a squad of small mountains, with narrow valleys intersecting and winding among them. Inhabiting a region, in the main, so rugged and so wild, it is easy to imagine that many of us must earn our bread by hard and constant labor, and will not be in the van of educational progress and reform. Yet, I am proud to say, that there are many schools under my charge which will compare favorably with the best of their kind; and there are others of which I can only say—bad, worse, worst.

I find a great lack of *teachers*. Boys and girls, enough of *them*, crowd the school house doors, and knock loudly for admittance as instructors of youth; but thorough teachers I too seldom meet. Yet we are not disheartened. There is a “noise and a shaking.” Ulster has held two institutes in succession, and the latter was an advance on the former, as Prof. Cruikshank will tell you—has told you no doubt—and as Deputy Superintendent Keyes would have told you, had he visited it as we earnestly hoped he would. Ulster county is verily coming; and the third assembly district is coming too.

I have now commenced my fifth course round my circuit of schools. I expect to pay my respects to all my teachers and the trustees, and the rest as far as may be, before the winter term closes. Then, when the *little ones* can come out again, I hope to meet them once more in the summer, and then, in all probability, retire before a successor.

I examine all applicants for license as thoroughly as possible, and give them the best advice I have on hand. To beginners and strangers I usually grant third grade licenses. I tell them to go at work—do their best, and expect the commissioner around soon. And when I do come, if I esteem them worthy, I give them other certificates; if otherwise, I beg them not to apply for another license to teach until they are better qualified for the work.



Finally, I endeavor promptly and faithfully to conduct the correspondence of my office, and to attend to all the business thereof as fast as it comes legally before me.

Respectfully and truly,

CYRUS SHOOK,

*School Commissioner.*

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## WARREN COUNTY.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Public Instruction:*

The following exhibit shows briefly something of the condition and operation of the common schools of Warren county:

There are in this county 135 entire school districts, and 10 joint districts attached to other counties. One district has no school house; one has two, with three school-rooms; and two districts have two school-rooms each.

The whole number of teachers employed during the year, is 267; the number employed at the same time, 138.

There are in the county 8,532 children of school age; of this number, 6,000 have attended school some portion of the year.

The total amount of money, as shown by the trustees' reports, expended for the support of schools, is \$11,970.82.

RATE-BILLS.—We do not prize that which costs us nothing. Hence, we find in those districts where a rate-bill is levied for the support of the school, the average attendance exceeds that of those districts where the public money is ample for the support of the school. Such districts, if they appreciate the liberality of the State, fail to improve the advantage afforded. Their actions seem to say, that the State is bound to give their children an education, and they are not going to send them to the school house for it.

SCHOOL HOUSES.—Not more than one-half of the school houses of the county are what they should be. Many of them are built close upon the wheel track, where dust and noise prevent close application. Many are without play-grounds, shade trees or out-houses. A source of discomfort to some schools is the unpleasant and gloomy condition of the school-room, broken chairs, table, desks and stove, which, as well as the location of the school house, have a wonderful effect upon the habits and proficiency of the school. A place where a pupil is to spend his time in the development of his mind, should be such as to present the beautiful in art and nature in their loveliest aspect.

The taste and skill of many of our teachers, render their school-rooms cheerful and pleasant. The walls are decorated with boughs, evergreens and flowers, wreathed in festoons, emblems and mottoes, which please, interest and instruct. In my summer visitations I often find the broken stove half hid from view by tastefully arranged boquets and fra-

grant flowers, which bloom as beautifully from their iron throne as in the costly vases in the mansions of the rich.

The internal arrangement of scores of our school-rooms, shows that they were not planned by an experienced pedagogue; too many lack what is of prime importance, a properly arranged recitation seat. With one or two exceptions our school-rooms are supplied with blackboards, though not of the most ample dimensions, and many with maps, globes and charts.

Of text-books, greatly to the disadvantage of schools, there is no uniformity. For reading books, I find almost everything in school from a medical almanac to the new testament.

Fuel is so abundant in this county, that in the construction of many school buildings it was deemed useless for the mechanic to spend any extra time in making them warm and comfortable, as all defects could readily be supplied with a little extra fuel. Hence, in winter, they are capital places to illustrate geography. Near the stove represents the torrid zone; a little distance away, the temperate; while pupils near the wall understand fully what frigid means.

The most urgent wants of the schools, are better arranged school-rooms; a better supply of school apparatus; more uniformity in text books, though this may be, to some extent, remedied by oral instruction, by giving more attention to practice and less to theory, by giving practical illustrations to rules which too often "play around the head but never enter it;" and frequent visitations to the school by parents and guardians.

TEACHERS.—The number of teachers employed during the school year is, males 66, females 201.

Only about one-third of these make teaching their permanent business, and about a like number are found at our annual teachers' drills. The wages paid—which do not always correspond with the qualifications of the teacher, his ability and success as an instructor—vary from five to thirty-five dollars per month. One of the best and most successful teachers of the county, has spent thirty-four years in the school-room.

The examinations to which teachers are subjected, are both oral and written, and the standard is that recommended in the Code, varied somewhat by circumstances. In addition to a teacher's literary acquirements, ability to systematically arrange and govern his school, and an aptness to impart instruction, are deemed equally important.

The teachers of the county are better versed in arithmetic and grammar, than in reading and geography.

But few certificates of the first grade have been granted, as I have deemed it advisable in many cases, to give licenses of the second grade only, to some who previously have held those of a higher. Because it is customary, I grant certificates of different grades, but it seems a little invidious—likely to give offense and promote envy.

The demand for teachers of higher qualification is increasing; our best teachers find constant employment, their services are always in demand by the most desirable schools.

But one Normal school graduate has been employed in the county during the year. His scholastic attainments, zeal and success as a teacher, have made him a model for others, and justly too, as he makes his scholars do their own thinking, and gives them plenty of hooks on which to hang ideas.

ACADEMIES.—There are but two regularly incorporated academies for pupils of both sexes, in the county, and one young ladies' seminary. The average attendance in each, the past year, has been about seventy-five, making the average aggregate attendance two hundred and twenty-five. These academies are each supplied with chemical and philosophical apparatus sufficient to illustrate the natural sciences. Their libraries are small. The books are not much read, perhaps because they are not such books as this fast age desire to read, or because they do not contain a general round of knowledge. Classical and scientific studies are pursued in these as in like institutions. Their chief source of support is from the tuition of the pupils. From the teachers' classes instructed in these academies, there has not been that practical benefit that could be desired, save in a few individual cases.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—Since academies and public schools have sprung up within a few hours' ride of every man's door, which offer superior advantages in all branches of study, the number of private schools, compared with that of former years, has materially decreased. Many of our pedagogues are familiar with the "higher branches" usually taught in select schools, which tends to retain in the district school the more advanced; and reports also show that private schools do not meet with the patronage received in former years.

TRUSTEES.—Though many districts still elect three trustees, yet there is an increasing sentiment in favor of but one, as in those districts that have but one greater harmony exists in school matters, and more efficiency in the general superintendence of the school than in those districts where there is a divided responsibility.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—At a sacrifice of about two weeks' time, and an expense averaging about four dollars each, about sixty teachers have, during the past year, received and imparted instruction and advice at a teachers' institute relative to the best modes of teaching, governing, &c. These teachers were earnest in their endeavors to improve in all that pertains to their vocation. A majority of these teachers are females; and it is to be regretted that a portion of our male teachers, who, by uniting with others in giving and receiving instruction and counsel, might do much good, still stand aloof from these gatherings, and with an air of self-sufficiency which is not begotten of wisdom, plod along in their schools, solitary and alone, merely keeping up the form, but not the life and spirit of right instruction.



At our last institute regular class exercises occupied about half of each day. The recitations were conducted by H. W. Barker, A. Herrick, and A. O. Amedon. Instruction was given as to the best methods of teaching and governing schools; also familiar discussions and essays on the different theories, the philosophy and practical details of teaching.

The evenings were devoted to discussions by the class of various school topics, educational matters, and philosophical questions. These exercises were highly interesting and instructive, and elicited much public interest, as did other exercises of the school.

A course of lectures on "Chemistry and Natural Philosophy," with experiments, was delivered by Prof. B. Frank Leggett. Also a course of lectures by Prof. W. H. Miller on "Anatomy and Physiology," illustrated with a manikin. There were also two general lectures, the first by L. A. Arnold—Subject: "Thought is King;" the last by the Rev. D. C. Hughes—Subject: "Nemesis of the War," followed by a poem by Prof. Leggett, entitled: "The Progress of Astronomy."

The Warren county teachers' association is a flourishing society, and is exerting a beneficial effect upon our schools, and merits liberal praise for its efficient efforts to make pleasant the path of knowledge.

DISTRICT LIBRARIES.—The system of school district libraries is one of the most beneficial systems ever devised by the munificence of the State for the education and *benefit of all*. Wickedly has this bounty of the State been abused—abused in the injudicious selection of books, and the apathy and neglect manifest towards this auxiliary of our district school system.

The observation of every one tends to the lamentable fact that the district libraries, which a few years ago were read and studied by every resident of the district, are now almost totally neglected, and in some districts are rapidly deteriorating in value. The books of the libraries are not neglected because parents and pupils have lost their taste for reading, but because the older ones of the district have read all the works in the library which treat of subjects in which they are interested, and because the younger class are not prompted and educated to the importance of reading such books as the library affords.

In the absence of a better plan to incite an interest in the libraries, I make the suggestion that all the books of each town be brought together at a convenient place, on a specified day, and that each district change books with other districts; thus each district would be enabled to make up from the aggregate list an entirely new catalogue of books. To avoid confusion, and enable each district to make up a list of books of equal value of those brought to the exchange, appraisers might be appointed to fix a price upon each book, and make a plainly written list of the number, title, and value of each offered in exchange. Thus, with a day's trouble, the oft read books of each school district might be exchanged for others, which to them would be new. Of course, each district would keep back such works as they wished to retain in the district.

This scheme might not seem practicable, but there is an imperious necessity of some plan being devised to incite an interest in the many valuable works in the libraries now covered thick with dust, the accumulation of more months than are found in Webster's calendar.

Keeping district libraries in the school room has been recommended as a remedy for this neglect. To this there are some objections: that in most cases the teacher, not being a voter in the district, could not be librarian, and would not be responsible for the damage or loss of books. There is force in this; but the teacher who cannot be trusted with a few books, ought not to be trusted with mind. Were the books kept in the school room, teachers could do much to stimulate pupils to read, by introducing, at intermission, and at suitable times, topics to be found in the books in the library. Scholars are naturally inquisitive, and if, in some manner, they become interested in a subject, they naturally would seek a further explanation, and thus a few cobwebs, perchance, might be brushed from the library books.

**DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC MONEY.**—The present system of apportioning the public money among the districts according to the number of resident children of school age, though plausible in theory, is, nevertheless, believed to be unjust in its practical results. One object of the Common School Fund is to stimulate the people to establish and maintain a system of common schools, and bring all within their influence. In some places it is feared that it operates to produce the opposite results. We know of several large districts where the average attendance is not more than one-third of the number enumerated by the trustees, and the names of scarcely one-half of the children are on the teachers' rolls. As the public money, in these districts, is sufficient to pay the teacher's wages without a rate-bill, there is no inducement to prompt the trustees or district to secure a general attendance. If attendance, rather than residence, was made the basis of apportionment, of a part, at least, of the public fund, it would be more appropriate, and would operate as a stimulus to bring into the schools all the children of the district. The greater the attendance the less the rate-bill; thus the district would receive a bonus for every day's attendance. At first thought, this might seem to militate against the sparsely settled rural districts, but figures actually show that the average attendance of schools in rural districts is, by a large per cent., greater than in villages, where it would seem that the nearness of schools would insure a general attendance.

**LABOR OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.**—I endeavor to visit each school in the county, once during each term. To do this requires a tedious amount of travel, far more, probably, than is performed by any other commissioner of this State, as a large portion of the 800 square miles comprising the territory of the county, is thinly inhabited, consequently the schools are at "magnificent distances," hid away among frowning mountains, at the extreme terminus of all kinds of roads but good. In my visitations I have endeavored to give such counsel to parents, teach-

ers and pupils, as seemed needful for the intellectual and physical improvement of the scholars. With what success these efforts have been crowned is not easily demonstrated, but the cordial co-operation I have received from parents and teachers, induces the belief that these efforts will have a beneficial effect on the future destinies of the youth of the county.

In addition to school visitations, I visit each town twice each year, for the purpose of granting certificates to teachers, giving previous notice of such appointments. Yet at these examinations not half of the teachers appear, the others through bashfulness preferring a private examination.

The settlement of district quarrels and imaginary grievances is a great source of annoyance to the commissioner, taking much time to adjust matters that seem very trivial to all, save the parties directly interested.

Particular pains have been taken to enjoin upon teachers the importance of rendering school lessons clear to the comprehension of the pupil, by familiar and simple illustrations. Teachers are instructed to give, in a concise and colloquial way, an explanation of each lesson when announced, its connection with cognate lessons and its practical bearing, thus fixing the mind of the pupil on the subject to be learned.

I endeavor to impress upon teachers the imperious importance of enthusiastic, zealous effort in their vocation, the importance of order and system in all their arrangements and exercises; also to aid them in all their various duties, and give such hints as to the different methods of instruction as shall aid them in the advancement of a system of enlightened education, and to attune the delicate chords of the human soul into the moral and intellectual harmonies of social life.

L. A. ARNOLD,

*School Commissioner.*

GLENS FALLS, *December, 1862.*

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## WASHINGTON COUNTY.

SALEM, *November 21, 1862.*

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction:*

Dear Sir—Herewith please find written report on public instruction within our official jurisdiction. We had not expected to make such a report, and consequently are entirely unprepared to report on some of the subjects mentioned. It is much more convenient for us to make this a joint report for the county of Washington than to report separately, and we suppose it will answer your purpose as well.

COMMON SCHOOLS.—There are in this county about 16,000 children between the ages of four and twenty-one. Of this number, about 11,000 have been instructed in our common schools. In many of our schools no rate-bills are collected. The attendance in such schools is not larger



in proportion to the number of children than in the other schools. We are inclined to think that the attendance is not particularly affected by the rate-bills. The provisions for the instruction of pupils are ample. The school houses are generally old, but are kept in good repair. The out-buildings are very much neglected, and but few of them answer at all the designs for which they were erected. No attention whatever has been paid to the ventilation of the school-room, except in a few houses recently built. Pleasant sites have usually been chosen; and, as a rule, they accommodate the whole district as well as any which could be selected.

The only apparatus in use here is the "globe," which is found in about one-fourth of the schools. It is used in some instances for a foot-ball, and in other cases the dust of centuries seems to have collected upon it,

There is no uniformity of text-books here. An attempt was made, some four or five years since, to introduce the same books in all our schools, but it only served to make "confusion worse confounded." The series most generally in use is that published by Ivison, Phinney & Co. We find our teachers better prepared to teach arithmetic than any other branch, and most deficient in spelling, reading, and grammar. A year or two since, very few of the teachers had read or studied any professional work. We now require some professional knowledge as one of the qualifications for teachers, and nearly all have complied with our request. There are but few Normal school graduates here. They are constantly employed, and paid a fair compensation for their services. We find them uniformly diligent and successful teachers.

ACADEMIES.—There are twelve academies in the county. We are not prepared to report particulars in regard to them.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—The number of private schools, 33; the number of pupils, 650.

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.—None.

SCHOOLS FOR COLORED CHILDREN.—None.

UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICTS.—There is but one. It is in the village of Salem.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—Nearly all the districts have school libraries, although many of the trustees failed to report the number of volumes in them. They are composed of Harper's School Library, Peter Parley's Magazines, and Patent Office reports. In most districts the libraries are totally neglected—hardly a book being taken from them in the course of a year. Some of the larger villages, however, have very large and valuable libraries connected with their common schools. In these libraries the number of books is constantly increasing. They are very generally read, and the librarian is paid for his services.

TRUSTEES.—When the act authorizing one trustee was passed, public opinion here was decidedly against it, but this sentiment is gradually changing in favor of but one trustee. About one-half of the districts have only one trustee, and many others are preparing to make the same

change. The three trustee system is the source of more than one-half of our difficulties. It frequently happens that one of the trustees has a son and another a daughter, and they agree on an exchange of courtesies by employing the son to teach in the winter and the daughter in the summer, without any regard to the wishes of the inhabitants or the qualifications of the teachers. Another difficulty in this system is in making contracts. Of course, the less the number of trustees the less danger there is of such interchanges and of misunderstandings in regard to contracts. About one-tenth of the trustees have complied with the requirements of No. 116 Code of Public Instruction. We have called particular attention to this, and in some instances the trustees have procured the books, but usually they are afraid of the expense. Owing to this neglect a large portion of our financial and statistical report is mere guess work. In many instances we have been compelled to insert new items to balance account of receipts and expenditures; and we are convinced that at least four-fifths of our report in regard to the attendance is incorrect.

**TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.**—The institute was in session twelve days. Rev. B. G. Northrop, of Boston, Massachusetts, was employed as instructor. Instruction was given in all the branches taught in our common schools. Special attention was paid to reading, spelling, object teaching and gymnastics. Lectures were delivered by M. P. Cavert, Esq., of the State Department, Albany; B. G. Northrop, of Boston, Mass.; C. R. Ballard, of Whitehall; and Prof. King, of Fort Edward. Our minutes are in the hands of a committee appointed to prepare a catalogue, and we are, consequently, unable to furnish you with a list of the subjects. We will, however, furnish you with a catalogue, containing the information you desire, as soon as it can be published. One hundred and thirty-two teachers were in attendance.

The exercises of the institute were conducted in an easy, familiar, and interesting manner, evincing great thoroughness, indomitable energy, and untiring perseverance. A corresponding earnestness was generated among the members, and a thirst for knowledge awakened, which, we trust, will be satisfied by no meagre attainments. The people were deeply interested in the exercises, and the highest opinions expressed of the success of the institute.

**SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.**—We have attended 32 public examinations of teachers. We were both present at each of these. We have adopted the plan of a written examination, and find that it requires at least two to look over the papers, and decide upon them (the same day), when the class is large. We think the written examination a much better test of the qualifications of teachers, less embarrassing to them, and it furnishes us with evidence of the justness of our decisions, which we have found of great service to us in cases where this has been questioned. At these examinations we have met 347 teachers; of this number 150 were refused. In addition to the public examinations, we have

examined 80 teachers in private; many of these were also refused, but we cannot give the exact number. We have been compelled to refuse some teachers whom we had formerly licensed, and we were as much surprised as they were at the deficiencies revealed to us. Others surprised us by the accuracy and correctness of their replies.

We have made, during the year, 409 visits in the different schools of the county. (I was prevented, by sickness and death in my family, from making as many visits as I desired.—J. C. E.) Our other duties have been so many and so varied, that we find it impossible to record them here. We have been constantly and actively employed for eleven months of the year, and yet, on looking back, we are mortified that so little has been accomplished.

Most respectfully yours,

EARL P. WRIGHT,  
JOHN C EARL.

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### WAYNE COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

Report on public instruction within the first assembly district of Wayne:

HOUSES.—Those built during the past few years are pleasantly located, the yards occupying from half to three-fourths of an acre of ground, and set with trees; the older structures have little or no yard. They are warmed by stoves, and ventilated by the lowering of windows.

APPARATUS.—Many of our larger districts are well supplied with globes, charts and outline maps; but in our smaller districts there is a great deficiency in this respect.

ATTENDANCE OF PUPILS.—Children begin their attendance at about the age of five years, and continue until about the age of sixteen, when they either pass into our academies or cease attending school. From five until twelve their average attendance is about six months in the year; from that time until sixteen, about three months. But this attendance is very irregular. I rarely find more than two-thirds of those whose names are on the roll present on the day of visitation.

RATE-BILLS.—These, in some respects, are injurious to the efficiency of our schools. Trustees wish to hire cheap teachers, and thus have a small rate-bill; but this comes from a mistaken wish to please their constituents, for I find, with scarcely an exception, that those districts that employ the higher priced teachers have the larger and more uniform attendance, in proportion to the number of children in the district. A district must be taxed in some way to support a school, and public sentiment favors the present method, to that of having the inhabitants of a district vote each year how much of a tax shall be levied upon the property of a district, for the support of a school during the year. But if the State would levy a tax upon the property of the State, sufficient for teachers' wages, public sentiment here would favor such a measure.



TEXT BOOKS used, with a few exceptions, are the following: Readers and Spellers, Sanders'; Geographies, Monteith and McNally's; Grammars, Clark's; Mathematics, Davies'.

TEACHERS.—About one-third are males, and two-thirds females. About one-tenth follow teaching as a permanent employment; the remainder continue in the business from four to six years. The average salary is \$18.50 per month.

Examinations are conducted in writing, and a copy of the questions and answers preserved. 315 different persons have applied for certificates; 208 have been granted, and 107 refused. Of those given, 10 are of the first grade for three years, 25 of the superior second grade for two years, 95 of the second grade for one year, and 78 of the third grade for four months.

I find teachers better prepared to teach arithmetic and grammar, and more deficient in geography and reading.

ATTENDANCE ON INSTITUTES.—About two-thirds of those engaged in teaching are always in attendance. These include, with scarcely an exception, all our best teachers. The institutes have done very much to improve our system of instruction.

DISTRICT LIBRARIES.—The universal sentiment here is that they are a failure. Librarians have informed me that not half a dozen books are drawn from the libraries in a year. Books are drawn and no attention paid to whether they are returned or not. I have found some of the best books taken from the district library and retained for years in private libraries.

TRUSTEES.—Public sentiment is about equally divided between the one and three trustee system, but is growing fast in favor of the former. Nearly all have complied with the requirement of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

T. ROBINSON.

ROSE, *December 15, 1862.*

## SECOND DISTRICT.

WALWORTH, *December 29, 1862.*

*To the State Superintendent:*

Dear Sir—I submit to you the report called for in your circular of August 27, 1862.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS.—The appearance of school buildings, fences and play-grounds, usually compares with the responsibility of the districts. The houses are warmed by stoves, and ventilated by the lowering of windows.

APPARATUS.—I find in the larger districts, a good supply of globes, charts and outline maps, but in the smaller ones a deficiency.

ATTENDANCE OF PUPILS.—Children usually commence their attendance at the age of six years, and continue until the age of 16, when they are

either numbered among those that attend the academies, or retire from school. Children until twelve years of age, generally attend school six months in the year; from that time until sixteen, about four months.

**RATE-BILLS.**—In some respects I deem them detrimental; some trustees will hire cheap teachers for the purpose of having a small rate-bill, and thus cripple the improvement of scholars—yet the present method may be preferable, unless the State should defray all the expenses of instruction, by a tax upon the property of the State.

**TRUSTEES.**—Public opinion is about equally divided as to which is preferable, one or three trustees. The trustees of about one-tenth of the number of school districts, have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

**TEXT BOOKS.**—With a few exceptions the text-books are as follows: Readers and Spellers, Sanders'; Mathematics, Robinson's; Geographies, Monteith and McNally's; Grammars, Brown's.

**TEACHERS.**—About one-third males, and two-thirds females, most of whom continue the business three or five years. The average wages \$18 per month.

**PRIVATE SCHOOLS.**—Number of private schools, five; number of pupils in attendance, eighty-two; a decrease from last year of five schools and seventy scholars.

**UNION FREE SCHOOLS.**—Number organized under the laws of 1853, three. Their locations are desirable, being in the quiet villages of Palmyra and Newark, of about three thousand inhabitants each.

**DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.**—Their condition generally is good, character of books highly diversified, yet morally good.

**TEACHERS' EXAMINATIONS.**—I have them in writing, consequently am prepared to furnish the State Department with a copy of questions and answers, if necessary, at any time.

I find the great deficiency in history and civil government. About two-thirds of the teachers have studied some work treating of the theory and practice of teaching. The number and grade of certificates are as follows: four first grade for three years, ten first grade for one year, twelve superior second grade for two years, one hundred and thirty-six second grade, and sixty-four third grade.

**ACADEMIES.**—Number in this assembly district, three; number of students in attendance, 250; the average ages, 17 years; studies pursued, common English, higher English, and the classics; wages paid teachers, \$2,900, sources of support, tuition and State appropriation; mean rate of tuition, \$5.75; condition of buildings good, being comparatively new; value of buildings, \$23,859; libraries, standard works generally, valued at \$1,039.98.

Apparatus new. Philosophical valued at \$2,646; astronomical valued at \$300; chemical valued at \$100.

M. W. REED,  
*School Commissioner.*

## WESTCHESTER COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

WEST FARMS, *January 8, 1863.*

TO VICTOR M. RICE :

Dear Sir—Owing to severe and protracted sickness in my family, together with the fact that some four weeks of my time was taken up with our institute at the very time I should have been preparing my reports, I have been unable sooner to forward you my special report.

The most of the schools in the first assembly district of Westchester, as you have already learned, are organized under the union free school act. There is not money enough collected by rate-bills in my whole district to pay the funeral expenses of the old system.

The school houses, with one or two exceptions, are in good condition. There are three new buildings now just completed—one in Yonkers, one in West Farms, and one in Morrisania—that are a credit to the county. The feeling throughout the district is altogether in favor of the union free school system, and of concentration rather than division into department schools.

About one-fourth of the teachers are males; and I know of no one teacher, at present, who does not intend to make teaching a permanent profession.

In regard to teachers' institutes, I would say that their history in Westchester county is short, unless the time of session is five instead of ten days. Depend upon it, this is so. Although the one held one year ago at White Plains, and the last one held at Sing Sing were both perfectly successful, yet there is no one knows better than the commissioners what it cost to make them such, and of the *strong feeling* entertained by both teachers and boards of education against encouraging this "two-weeks session" in the future.

The teachers of Westchester county, particularly those of the first assembly district, will compare, in every respect, with those of New York city. Allow us one week's session, and, in my opinion, there will not be twenty teachers in the whole county who will absent themselves from the institute. On the other hand, if we are still compelled to hold a ten days' session, I fear the result.

Hoping that my circumstances are such that you will accept this apology for my special report,

I subscribe myself,

Yours truly,

THEO. KENT.

## SECOND DISTRICT.

TO the Hon. V. M. RICE, *Supt. of Public Instruction :*

Sir—In conformity with your requisition in "Circular to School Commissioners," dated August 27, 1862, I herewith submit the following report:



About three-sevenths of the persons of school age, residing in this district, attend the common schools. A small proportion of the whole—those who reside in the large villages—having the opportunity and the means, attend other schools; while only the children of the thriftless poor, few in number, are trained up in idleness, without any appreciation of the advantages offered them in the common schools.

The second assembly district of Westchester county, comprises 53 school districts—engaging the services of 78 teachers at one time. These schools register, according to the season, from 3,800 to 4,300 pupils; the average attendance, being from 2,400 to 2,800. Many children are sent to school at the early age of six years. In the large districts where they have graded schools, and a primary department with teachers adapted to this class, attendance even at this early age is no cause for regret, as here they acquire those habits of attention and obedience, which prepare them to receive the advantages of the intermediate department as soon as they enter it. In the rural districts, however, they may be a drawback to the general welfare. If *any* attention is paid to them, it cannot be sufficient to improve them, and is too much for the advantage of the other pupils.

The fact that so many districts refuse to adopt the union free school, would seem to indicate a preference for the system of payment of “teachers’ wages” from the proceeds of the rate-bill. But this cannot be accepted as conclusive, as, not unfrequently I think, the inhabitants are influenced in various ways by the minority of wealthy residents, having comparatively little interest in the school, and who object to the free school because it would increase their taxes. In one instance, where the free school law is in force, I was requested to inquire how they might return to the old system. This request came from men of large taxable property, having no children to send to school. That the rate-bill is in some instances a detriment to the cause of public education cannot be doubted; as a slight falling off of attendance causes the withdrawal of other pupils, leaving a smaller proportion to bear the expense if the school is continued. Sometimes this extends so far as to break up the school. In all cases, in which only the legal time of six months school is reported, I think that the rate-bill is the true cause of what should be deemed a deficiency in school time. Another difficulty which may arise from the rate-bill, is, that the teacher, knowing that his continued employment depends upon “a large school,” is led, in his ministrations, to please the pupils, and this it may be to the sacrifice of their progress in sound knowledge.

Four of the districts have two school houses each, making in all 57 school houses in the assembly district. Of these, six are large and commodious edifices, having each several departments. With one exception, they are furnished with the most approved modern school furniture, and with more or less of the accessories to successful instruction. They are located in the villages of Beckmantown, Tarrytown, Irvington,

Dobbs' Ferry, New Rochelle and White Plains. Districts No. 5, Greenburgh, 4 and 7, Mount Pleasant, and 7, Northcastle, have also substantial brick school houses of smaller dimensions. Of the remaining 47, 26 are neat and substantial frame buildings, 10 are poor, and 11 very poor. But few of these have any method of ventilation, other than letting down a window-sash, or opening a door, excepting the very poor, which are well ventilated by innumerable fissures in floor and ceiling, and unglazed windows.

It is to be hoped that the day is not far distant, when the people in such districts will give, at least, as much attention to the comfort of their children in school as they do to their cattle in the barn. A large majority of the houses are warmed by stoves, a few by heaters or furnaces. Many of the school houses are deficient in that essential requisite—a play ground. The difficulty in the rural districts of securing a suitable site for the house is very great; hence, they are frequently situated upon some rocky eminence, or on the confines of a swamp upon the road-side. I most heartily concur in the suggestion of the commissioner for the third district, Henry White, Esq.: That the passage of a law enabling trustees to appropriate land for school purposes, in the same manner that land is now taken for highways, viz: without consent of owners, at a valuation by disinterested parties, would be a decided advantage to our schools in this particular.

Quite recently the trustees of districts Nos. 1 and 2, in the town of Pelham, have erected new school houses, neat frame buildings, and well adapted in their structure and furnishing to school purposes; while in the village of Hastings the trustees have in course of erection a handsome edifice of brick, which is designed to be, when completed, equal to the best in the county.

With the exception of the populous and wealthy districts, they have but little school apparatus, other than blackboards, now and then a globe, and a few maps or charts.

The text-books in use, in many of the schools, are almost as varied as the number of pupils taught. This variety in text-books, I consider as one of the greatest drawbacks to the usefulness of the common school; a difficulty, however, which, I presume, cannot be obviated until the people take much more interest in the whole subject of education than they now do, and learn that a few dollars spent for new and improved text-books, would be more than returned to them in the increased progress made by their children.

Among the studies pursued, arithmetic, reading and writing, receive the most attention. There is, however, in nearly all the schools a growing disposition to extend the range of studies, so that in many, grammar, algebra and history receive a fair share of attention; while in some others, natural philosophy, botany and physiology have been successfully introduced.

The average age at which children commence their attendance at

school, may be placed at 7 years, and the time of their attendance, at 6 years; but in many cases this time, by repeated intermissions, is extended over a period of 8 or 10 years.

With great room for improvement, there is, however, much that is encouraging in the general progress of education in the district. The increase of new and improved text-books, together with the advantages already found in the "teachers' institute," are awakening teachers to a sense of the dignity and responsibility of their calling; while the supervision of the commissioner, when judiciously exercised, is a source of strength to the teacher, and an encouragement to renewed exertions. Of the 78 teachers engaged in the district, about two-thirds are females. This proportion varies slightly, according to the season—the proportion of males being larger in the winter than in the summer.

In some of the rural districts, the engagement of a male teacher for the winter is considered necessary, in consequence of the attendance of larger boys. I cannot but deem this a mistake, and somewhat of a libel brought by the trustees and parents against their own children. I have never yet met with the woman, who was a true and earnest teacher, who was not competent to govern any boy who was a suitable companion for other children in the district. It must be self-evident that the teacher who is out of practice six months of the year—all other things being equal—cannot be as well fitted for the duties of a teacher as one who is constantly engaged.

In this connection, there is also to be considered the animus of the teacher. The successful professional teacher is one who loves children, and loves the work of teaching, and such will not allow themselves to be called away from that work every summer, because in some other occupation they can earn a few more dollars. The advantage also of having only *one* teacher, if proficient, for a series of years, lies in the knowledge which she gains of the temperament and character of the pupils, and therefore of the best method of influencing the head and heart for their good. As you will learn from the "statistical report" herewith, there are 39 private schools in the district. I am unable to give the precise number of pupils in these, as some of the reports from trustees failed to give me this information; it is probably not far from 800. The number of private schools, and of course their pupils, is doubtless smaller this year than heretofore, as the war has seriously interfered with their prosperity.

There are 15 union free schools in the district, situated at Tarrytown, Irvington, Hall's Corners, Hastings, Dobbs' Ferry, Mamaroneck, Beekmantown, Sleepy Hollow, Pleasantville, New Rochelle, Pelham, Rye (near Mamaroneck), Rye, Portchester, and White Plains.

The district libraries, with some few exceptions, are in good order, arising from the fact that they are little used. Histories, biographies, and travels make up the bulk of the libraries, to which may be added a few scientific works and a few novels. In many districts the interest in



the library has passed away. This is to be attributed, in part, to the want of leisure for reading among the adults in the rural districts, while in the populous districts, those who have the time, have also the means to purchase books for themselves; and, in part, to the extended circulation of magazines and weekly newspapers. There is scarcely a family that has not access to some periodical; and the reading supplied by the greater number of those which weekly flood the land is of a nature to vitiate the taste of the young people, and render them averse to useful reading; so that upon question as to the use of the library, complaint is made that it contains nothing but dry reading.

Let the cause for this want of interest be what it may, I am under the impression that the district libraries have done all the good that can be accomplished in that direction; that the necessity for them is removed by the increase of standard periodicals, and that the money appropriated to the library might, if massed, be spent more judiciously in the general work of education.

A large majority of the districts elect three trustees. Whether this is to be taken as an indication of the preference of the people for three rather than one, or of the aversion of any one man to take the responsibility of the most difficult and thankless office in the State, may be an open question. I incline to the latter opinion. I think that in a number of districts all the good that is accomplished is the work of one trustee—the other two serving as checks, preventing more good which might be done. Certainly, among the best governed districts, you will always find those with only one trustee.

A teachers' institute for the county was held in the village of Sing Sing in November last. The session was continued for twelve days. More than 150 teachers attended during this time, and about 70 were present ten consecutive days. The institute was under the superintendence of Prof. N. A. Calkins, of New York. During the session lectures were delivered by the Hon. F. W. Ricord, State Superintendent for New Jersey—Subject: "The Material Aids to Education;" Prof. John F. Stoddard—Subject: "Objects, and some of the Elements of Success in Life." Prof. Stoddard also conducted a mathematical exercise. Hon. E. W. Keyes, Deputy State Superintendent—Subject: "The Educational Problem;" and by the commissioner for the second district—Subject: "The Necessity of Moral Training as a Foundation for True Greatness."

In addition to these, Prof. J. W. Lusk, and C. C. Curtiss, Esq., principal of the school in Sing Sing, gave valuable lessons in writing; and Prof. Frobisher, of New York, instruction in elocution, illustrated with admirable readings and recitations. Prof. Calkins went over the whole range of studies pursued in our common schools, giving prominence to grammar, object teaching, and arithmetic. Commissioner Robinson, of Wayne county, and Prof. Reed, of the Highland institute, Newburgh, interested and instructed the teachers—the first in mathematical geography, the latter in vocal music. Dr. Fisher, of Sing Sing, gave an ex-

cellent, familiar lecture upon the first principles of geology and mineralogy—its only fault being its brevity.

The teachers gave an earnest and undivided attention to the subjects brought before them, and displayed in every way a determination to profit by the instruction given.

Notwithstanding the success of this institute, and the large attendance, I feel compelled to add one word in behalf of the teachers of the county.

In no county in the State, perhaps, are there so many difficulties to contend with in the matter of institutes. Its proximity to the metropolis furnishes advantages to many of the teachers—those in the first district especially—in the form of lectures, and the facility for procuring the best text-books and educational works, which renders the institute, in their opinion, of minor worth. These teachers attend, if at all, unwillingly, and are wearied with the details of instruction highly valuable to others in attendance.

The expense for board, in connection with the loss of school time, which many are obliged to make up, becomes a tax which the teachers are little able to bear. Some absent themselves from the institute on this account. In some of the boards of education of the union free schools, and with some of the trustees of other schools, the opinion seems to prevail that the institute is only one of the numerous ways of expending the people's money for worthless purposes. Others again imagine that their teachers are perfect—having no need of further instruction. In one word, these gentlemen fail to catch the spirit, or see the object of the Department, which is to give the greatest advantage of instruction to the whole; and that, therefore, when a teacher is found capable of imparting somewhat to others, it is his duty, above all others, to attend. A deficiency in attendance arises from these erroneous and limited views of the objects of the institute.

In view of these difficulties, I respectfully suggest: That, if compatible with the interests of the Department, a provision be made for Westchester county by which an attendance of six days at the institute will be deemed sufficient.

I beg leave to add here, that the statute obliging the commissioner to inaugurate a teachers' institute, and which exercises no corresponding control over trustees and teachers, and yet makes the expenses of the institute depend upon the attendance of teachers, is worthy of the days of Pharaoh, when the people were compelled to gather their own straw, and yet diminish naught in their tale of bricks. It was probably an oversight of the Legislature, and, when corrected, will doubtless be more in accordance with the democratic institutions of the country.

The duties of the commissioner, when faithfully performed, are arduous, and render the office by no means a sinecure. I have not preserved a record of details, and therefore can only state generally, that in visiting schools, examining teachers, attending for counsel and settlement of

local difficulties and questions of boundary, attending and assisting at the institute, and preparation of lecture, and addresses for the children, about three-fourths of my time has been occupied.

My examinations of teachers are partly oral and partly written. They consist of exercises in spelling, reading and writing, questions upon the most important rules of the arithmetic, with problems for solution and explanation of process. In grammar, the candidate is required to analyze a sentence in the manner in which he would require his pupils to do it. Geography, history, the science of government, and composition, invariably receive attention. The questions upon these are intended to discover the candidate's proficiency, and his method of imparting to others. For the higher grade of certificate, to these are added questions in natural philosophy, physiology, and algebra, together with problems. I have considered the Normal school graduate as the standard for first grade certificates, hence have granted but few. I have given mainly third grade, and a few second grade certificates. I find the greatest deficiency in spelling, defining and grammar. Comparatively few teachers have read any work on the theory and practice of teaching. There are eight or ten graduates of the Normal school teaching in the district, and in every case they are eminently successful, and an honor to the institution. The demand for first-class teachers is almost universal, but the remuneration offered limits the supply.

I am not informed as to the salaries paid in the larger schools; I think the greatest does not exceed \$800 per annum; while throughout the district generally, females receive from \$15 to \$25, and males from \$18 to \$30 per month.

Respectfully submitted.

ISAAC D. VERMILYE,

*School Commissioner.*

ARMONCK, *December 26, 1862.*

### THIRD DISTRICT.

To the Hon. VICTOR M. RICE, *Supt. Pub. Instruction:*

Sir—In obedience to your instructions, the undersigned, school commissioner for the third district in the county of Westchester, would report as follows:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—There are few children in this district who do not, for a longer or shorter period, attend the common schools. The exceptions embrace two classes, the children of parents who deem their offspring above association with common people, and the children of the lowest and most vicious class of community, who, having never enjoyed the benefits of knowledge, cannot comprehend its value. The first class, in some localities, is quite numerous; the second is everywhere small. Very few, indeed, are so low as to be unable to appreciate, in some degree, the advantages their children may derive from attendance at



school. In a large majority of the districts, the entire population may be said to patronize the common school, and the children of those who can afford it are kept there until they are prepared to enter the academy, and, in rare instances, the college. But there are a few localities in which a spirit of caste has been fostered, until none who can possibly pay for the schooling of their children will allow them to enter the district school house, and the result is that many of them grow up both vain and ignorant.

Rate-bills, undoubtedly, bear severely in occasional instances, and prevent the attendance of some children. Those whose means are limited, but who have a little property which the collector can reach, and whom the trustees, therefore, will not exempt from the rate-bill, are obliged to regulate the attendance of their children to correspond with their means of payment, and cannot give them the opportunities for instruction they desire. The very poor are necessarily exempt, and generally feel no delicacy about availing themselves of the privilege of sending their children to school. That public sentiment favors rate-bills would seem to be established by the fact that a majority of the districts pay their teachers in this way, although among the more enlightened classes of community I often hear them condemned.

The provisions for the instruction of pupils, including the character of the school houses, and the mode in which they are warmed and ventilated, are by no means uniform. In respect to them, the districts may be divided into three classes—good, indifferent, and bad. The first class is the smallest, embracing the villages of Peekskill and Sing Sing, and about half-a-dozen of the rural districts. In these there is a commendable degree of interest manifested in the subject of education, and constant improvements are being made, and though they may not now be models, they bid fair to become such. In two of the rural districts, wealthy individuals have used their means liberally for the erection and furnishing of the school houses, and adornment of the grounds around them, and they bid fair to become the most comfortable, beautiful and attractive places in those districts. The names of these gentlemen are, George Dayton, Esq., of Peekskill, and Benjamin Field, Esq., of New York city, and it affords me pleasure to make honorable mention of these public spirited gentlemen.

The second class, styled indifferent, embraces from 35 to 40 districts. These have mostly comfortable school houses, tolerably seated and indifferently ventilated. Some of the edifices are new—very great improvements upon those preceding them—but built with too much regard to economy, to make them just what they should be. They are mostly ventilated by lowering the window-sash, warmed by stoves, furnished plainly and cheaply, supplied with comfortable outhouses, but limited playgrounds. This class is increasing, although the war has checked improvement in this respect as in many others.

The third class comprises a number about equal to the second, and a

variety as great as the most vivid imagination can depict. Some of them have passable houses, and nothing else of any value. They are ventilated by crevices in the floor or ceiling; warmed in coldest weather, not at all; much too small to accommodate the children of the district; seated with rough backless benches; stand in close proximity to the highway, with no play-ground; and some of them without outbuildings, or sites on which to build them.

The quality and supply of school apparatus and text-books corresponds very nearly with the character of the edifices and furniture. If these are good, those are also; and if the latter are poor, the former are scanty and deficient.

More attention is perhaps devoted to arithmetic, than to any other branch of study. The "universal Yankee must learn to calculate." Reading, writing, spelling and geography, rank next in the estimation of parents. Grammar, history, natural philosophy, algebra, Latin, physiology, botany, &c., follow in about the order named.

Children are too often sent to school at four years of age, receiving thereby little, if any benefit themselves, and seriously interfering with the prosperity of the school. The average age at which they are allowed to attend is, perhaps, five years; and the whole time spent there may amount to an average of four years—not consecutive, however, but running through a period of ten to fourteen years, during which they attend two to six months each year.

The general progress of schools in this district is encouraging. Among their many wants, the most urgent, in my judgment, is the passage of a law which will enable the districts to take land for school purposes, without the consent of the owners, at the valuation of competent and impartial judges. This would secure immediate improvement in a large number of districts, in which the people are anxious to build new school houses, but have no site except a few feet by the side of the highway, and can buy none anywhere near the centre of their districts.

TEACHERS.—About two-thirds of the teachers in this district are females, the majority of whom follow teaching as a permanent employment; while the male teachers, with comparatively few exceptions, teach only during the winter, or periods of inactivity in other kinds of business. The highest salary paid any teacher in this district, is \$900 per annum, the lowest about \$100; females usually receiving from \$10 to \$25 per month, males from \$16 to \$35 per month.

A teachers' association was organized in this district in December last, which was unexpectedly successful. Neither teachers' institutes nor associations had been well attended in this county, previous to the institute of 1861; but energetic and persevering efforts on the part of the commissioner, and the able supervision of Prof. N. A. Calkins, last fall, have effected a very great change in the sentiments of the teachers, the benefits of which the schools are now reaping.

I have generally conducted the examination of teachers in the follow-

ing manner : They are asked to read a paragraph; a sentence is then read to them, which they are requested to write. This is selected with a view to test their proficiency in spelling. They are then required to define the principal words in the sentence, together with such others as may suggest themselves, explaining the meaning as accurately as they can in words adapted to the comprehension of children. They are required to analyze and parse a sentence, answering such questions as may be proposed in connection with the exercise. Their knowledge of arithmetic is tested by requiring the solution and explanation of a few practical examples, with the reasons for the various processes necessary. A little time is devoted to geography, more to history, principally that of our own nation, and the character of our institutions; impressing upon them the duty of acquiring an intimate knowledge of these subjects, and the propriety of imparting to the children under their charge so much instruction in them, as shall lead them to understand and appreciate the institutions bequeathed to us by our fathers.

Many of the teachers are deficient in the last mentioned branches of knowledge; a less number fail in grammar, while arithmetic, as it is the favorite of parents, is generally best understood by the teachers. But a small proportion have studied any work treating of the theory and practice of teaching—just what proportion I cannot say without a more extended inquiry.

I have granted during the last year 12 first, 55 second, and 28 third grade certificates, and have refused to grant any to many applicants, of which I have made no record.

The supply of teachers of high qualifications is quite equal to the demand, though not equal to the need of them. But few Normal school graduates and undergraduates are employed in this district. With rare exceptions, they are successful teachers, and do credit to the institution which educated them. Those who fail, do so, not from a deficiency of knowledge, but from a lack of common sense—an article the best of schools are not competent to furnish to every applicant.

ACADEMIES.—I have not been able to procure the statistics required to reply to the queries propounded in your circular; previous to the reception of which, I had not supposed any knowledge upon this subject would be expected of me. I suppose the deficiency may be supplied by a reference to the reports of the academies to the Regents of the University.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—The number of such schools in this district, I learn from the reports of the trustees, is 44. I have no data from which to judge of their increase or decrease. The number of pupils in attendance, is about 750.

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.—I know of but one in this district. This has been recently established in the village of Sing Sing, but I have no knowledge of its condition.

There is no school provided exclusively for colored children.



UNION FREE SCHOOLS.—There are but two in the district, both located in the village of Peekskill.

DISTRICT LIBRARIES.—They are generally tolerably well taken care of; though some are sadly neglected. A large proportion of the books have been judiciously selected, notwithstanding worthless ones have occasionally crept in. They are principally composed of histories and biographies, ancient and modern; with some works treating of natural science and metaphysics, a few volumes of poetry, occasionally a standard novel, and a sprinkling of stories for children. The people do not value them so highly, nor read them so extensively as they did when the libraries were first established. This may be accounted for by the fact, that most of the readers of the district read the new books soon after they are purchased, and the additions being latterly few they are quickly perused, and nothing more is thought of the library until the time arrives to add some new volumes to its shelves.

PRIVATE LIBRARIES, PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS.—Most families have, at least, a small library, which, in many instances, is limited only by their ability to purchase books. Newspapers and periodicals are taken in large numbers, few families being entirely destitute of the former.

TRUSTEES.—A large majority of the district *elect* three trustees, and it is fair to presume they *prefer* to do so. The trustees of nearly all the districts have complied with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction; although some have not taken care of, and do not properly use the books after having purchased them.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—The last institute for this county was held in the village of Sing Sing, commencing November 3d, and closing November 15th, 1862, and was in session twelve days. Professor N. A. Calkins, of New York city, conducted the exercises; and was the only person who was paid for his services as instructor.

The subjects on which instruction was given were numerous, embracing nearly the whole range taught in common schools. Object teaching, arithmetic, grammar, elocution and writing, received each a large share of attention; while geography, spelling and school management were not forgotten.

One hundred and fifty-five teachers were in attendance. Of these, about seventy were present ten days or more; most of the others five or six days each. No institute in this county was ever so well attended before; and it was not a mere formal matter with the teachers, but the great majority earnestly sought to qualify themselves for the performance of their duties.

The inhabitants of the village and vicinity also manifested a lively interest in the exercises.

The commissioners for this county have to contend with peculiar difficulties in the organization and conduct of teachers' institutes. We are so near the city of New York, that city habits and tastes exercise very great influence over both trustees and teachers. Many of the schools in

the first and second assembly district are *union free schools*, and it has been found almost impossible to induce the boards of education, having charge of these, to consent to the dismissal of their schools for ten consecutive days. Board, too, for teachers, cannot be cheaply obtained; and this prevents the attendance of many of the teachers of small schools in the rural districts. In view of these facts, and others which might be urged, I would respectfully suggest, that the teachers of this county be credited for six days' attendance instead of requiring ten. Cannot this change be effected in this county, if it is not desirable for other portions of the State?

SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS.—A detail of the labors of a school commissioner, who conscientiously endeavors to discharge all the duties of his office, would occupy no small space. The following statement will convey some idea of a portion of them:

I have a record of one hundred and eighty-two days in which I performed official duties. This by no means embraces all; for such work as the writing of letters, advising and consulting with trustees, and the preparation of addresses often passes unnoted. I have used my horse and carriage in the performance of my duties, ninety days; driving on an average eighteen miles a day and over, making a total distance of 1,636 miles; and have traveled on railroads 427 miles; making total distance traveled 2,063 miles. I have licensed ninety-five teachers; and have examined a considerable number of applicants who failed to satisfy the requirements of the law. I have sold one school house and divided the proceeds; have examined, and decided in accordance with the forms of the law, four applications for alteration of districts; and have assisted in the organization and conduct of a teachers' institute. I have visited every school in my district once, and sixty-three of them twice; making 146 visits; have visited nearly every *district* twice, and some of them three times; but, in the districts which report but one visit to the school, I was so unfortunate as to visit them while the schools were vacant. I have, by personal effort, materially assisted in the organization of a teachers' association, over which I have presided, and which I have addressed. I have assisted in making the apportionments of public money, and filling vacancies in Normal school; and last, *but not least*, I have about completed the preparation of my abstract and report.

I have the honor to be your most obedient servant,

HENRY WHITE,

*School Commissioner.*

YORKTOWN, November 26, 1862.

## WYOMING COUNTY—FIRST DISTRICT.

To Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*:

The undersigned, in answer to the requisition for a written report, presents the following:

COMMON SCHOOLS.—The total number of persons of school age is 6,458. The total attendance in all the common schools during the school year was 4,514—leaving 1,944 who have attended no common school. About one-half this number have been pupils in other schools. From personal knowledge, I have no doubt that a large portion of this remaining half of 1,944 are persons over 17 years of age—kept at home engaged in various avocations. I think that, at least, 175 young men of school age have gone to the war.

In very few instances have rate-bills reduced the attendance, and public sentiment favors the system as *now* applied, rather than free schools by regular taxation.

SCHOOL HOUSES.—Two neat and substantial structures have been built during the year. Twenty-seven have been built in the last five years—nearly all creditable to the tax-payers in the several localities. An equal number should yet be built, and then the school houses in Wyoming county, first commissioner district, will grade above any rural county in western New York. The work of building new school houses in several districts was just commencing, when the war claimed the attention of the masses and made large drafts upon the pockets of the tax-payers, so that this work has been nearly suspended. Most of the new structures are comfortably furnished, and ventilated in the modern modes; the old ones, many of them, need no extra ventilation; more of them are ventilated by sliding the upper sash of the windows downwards. About 75 are provided with suitable out-houses; 40 with yards fenced and shade trees.

But few attend district schools with any degree of regularity before 7, or after 17 years of age. This is unusually true in Sheldon and Bennington among the German population. Each of these towns has a parochial school, that during four months of each year is largely attended.

TEXT-BOOKS.—“Their name is legion,” or *was*; and now we have by far too many series of books. Sanders’ Readers and Speller (new series), Brown’s Grammar, Robinson’s Mathematics, Monteith’s (Nos. 1 and 3) and McNally’s Geographies, are the books most common in our schools. A familiar conference was held at our recent teachers’ institute, when “text-books” was made the order of the day. We have deeply felt the need of some regular series recommended by the State Department, or else some mode to punish sharp book agents for leading astray young and inexperienced teachers (*well disposed* but ignorant patrons), with their clap-traps and pictures. This same allusion will apply to school apparatus as purchased in many school districts.

THEIR MOST URGENT WANTS.—More teachers who engage in their busi-



ness as a life-time calling. (An utter impossibility in scattered rural districts with only six or seven months school in the year.) More interest on the part of parents in the school; more earnest work on the part of school commissioner, with higher standard of attainments on the part of teachers; a work of time—not of one year or five.

TEACHERS.—Whole number employed during the year, 208. Male 50, female 153; many of the latter taught the same school the whole time the school was in session. Fifty male teachers have gone to the war during the year. Average wages of male teachers, \$25 per month; of female teachers, \$12 in summer, \$20 in winter. Female teachers—average time they teach, seven years; males, five years. About three-fourths attend teachers' institutes and associations..

Examinations are held in the several towns in April, and in October at the teachers' institute. Oral examinations one and a half hours; written, three and a half to five hours—depending on the number of candidates, and also of the commissioner's previous knowledge of them individually.

Young men are found best qualified in mathematics—deficient in orthography and geography. Females excel in these. One-half to two-thirds of the teachers have spent more or less time in studying the "Theory and Practice," by D. P. Page. I have not found one exception to this in the teachers' classes taught in the Middlebury academy, under the supervision of Prof. M. Weed.

NORMAL SCHOOL GRADUATES AND UNDERGRADUATES.—For some time past we have had applications only from young ladies, and they without exception, after graduating at that school, have either gone elsewhere with their light, or married, and thus left the teachers' ranks. There is now, for the first time in several years, an undergraduate of the Normal school teaching in this district—and, as I learn, to the entire satisfaction of the patrons of one of my *best* schools.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—Ten private schools, and 305 pupils are reported by trustees this year; although this is an apparent increase of nearly 50 per cent. on the previous report, yet I have no doubt this is a more accurate report than that of 1861; and that, as a whole, there is less confidence in private schools, and more in the public schools and the school system as it is. The attendance on private schools is gradually decreasing.

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.—There are no other parochial schools in Wyoming county than the two in the towns of Sheldon and Bennington.

SCHOOLS FOR COLORED CHILDREN.—There are no such schools, and few colored children. These few attend district schools, and seem to be improving their time and making good progress.

UNION FREE SCHOOLS.—There is one (No. 10) in the village of Warsaw.

DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.—Their condition is bad, and the books in most districts unread. The character of the books in a few instances is questionable. Most of them are good selections; but, as the law now

is, many of those districts where books were *always* least appreciated now receive \$3 or over, and expend the sum for books that remain in the hands of the librarian unused. I here refer to districts controlled by parents of foreign birth. In most of the households and districts private libraries, periodicals and newspapers have superseded district libraries. The reading portion of the inhabitants are surfeited with periodicals and newspapers—particularly during the last school year, has the news been the reading and conversational topic—at home and in school, in many instances at the expense of the common studies.

TRUSTEES.—About one-half of the districts have adopted the one trustee system in the outset. It is still popular in all these districts where they have elected the man for the place. In some instances a trustee has been elected, who has placed some special friend of his in the school as teacher, contrary to the express wishes of many in the district. In almost every case of this kind, the people have returned to three trustees. Under proper restrictions, I am sure the one trustee system is the better, and its working would be approved by the people. About two-thirds of the districts have complied with No. 116 Code of Public Instruction.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—The last commenced October 13th, at Castile, 80 teachers in attendance. Second week, in Attica, October 20th, 132 teachers in attendance—the largest attendance ever secured in Wyoming county. Evening sessions were uncomfortably crowded by citizens. Day sessions all represented by trustees in search of teachers.

ACADEMIES.—The Middlebury academy, of which Prof. Weed is principal, is doing more for common schools, in the way of giving a thorough course of instruction to teachers' classes, than all other select or academic schools in this county.

For want of ability and strength to make the journey to Perry, I some time since wrote to M. R. Atkins, Principal of Perry academy, for a similar report from that institution, but have failed to receive it. The teachers' class in that school is a new thing, and as yet has failed to send out as many thorough teachers, as school men expected. From the examination of the last class educated there, the work is evidently growing better. This institution is laboring under a heavy debt, which now seems likely to be paid soon—when this transpires we shall have two excellent academies.

SCHOOL COMMISSIONER.—Detail of labor performed in discharge of duties: Visiting schools, five days per week, during December, January, February, June, July and August, when traveling is passable; Saturdays, at home, examining teachers, answering letters, &c. Spring, making school district alteration, examining teachers in the several towns, visiting larger schools, and schools in other localities. Autumn, preparing for, and holding teachers' institute, and the labor of the spring repeated.

Your obedient servant, GEORGE H. DUNHAM,

JOHNSONSBURGH, N. Y., December 31, 1862

*School Commissioner.*

[Asscm. No. 20.]

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## SECOND DISTRICT.

Hon. V. M. RICE, *Superintendent of Public Instruction* :

Sir—In conformity to your request, the undersigned submits the following report:

The number of schools under my supervision is 82. One-half of this number are accomplishing, to no inconsiderable extent, the end contemplated in our system of public instruction, viz: the physical, moral and intellectual development of the children in the vicinities of their location. The other half prevent and encourage this kind of development in about equal proportions, and it is questionable whether it can be said of their effects,

“If evil seem the most, yet good most is.”

Among this latter half there are some which, for want of a more appropriate term, I must call public nuisances. In these districts the majority of the inhabitants seem to regard a school as a sort of hereditary necessity—a thing which, if kept open six months in one year, will draw a certain sum of money with which to keep it open for the same time the next year. Indeed, to these, the question, “How can we best use this money for the advancement of our children,” seems not to have occurred; but “How can we run our school six months with just the public money,” is a question as familiar as are common household words.

Wherever we find this sordid feeling, we also find the great objects of public instruction wholly ignored; and the school, if a dollar must be raised by rate-bill for its support, is regarded as a serious burden, of which a majority are eager to rid themselves.

The above statements relative to those schools which I deem of little utility in the grand process of true development, are broad, and to those not conversant with their condition, may be considered exaggerations. Hence I propose to speak briefly of the most prominent facts in regard to them, believing that thus every word before written will be established.

In nearly all those districts having three trustees, the duties of their office are either miserably performed, or omitted altogether; and nearly all those districts in which the schools show the most marked signs of inutility, the three trustee system is still adhered to, and the men selected to fill this office are, in a majority of instances, known to be exceedingly parsimonious in their own business matters. Further, as a condition of their election, they are frequently made to promise that no rate-bill shall be made, with their consent, during their term of office. In districts that adopted this policy it is not common to find three intelligent trustees, and it not unfrequently happens that no one of the three can make an annual report. During the season when intelligent trustees are asking for the best teachers, regardless of the cost, these money saving drones remain inactive until this kind of teachers are employed, and then ransack the neighborhood in pursuit of teachers who will work



for from eight to twelve shillings per week, and "board at home." This is no overwrought statement; the shameful reality confronts the commissioners of the Empire State, and calls, not for appeals to the best instincts of sordid natures, for these have been made; not for citations to the example of sister districts which have nobly given and thrice nobly received, for such examples have been cited; but it does call for the strong arm of legislation, which shall coerce every district to raise an amount for teachers' wages, equal to that furnished by the State for the same purpose.

Some two weeks since, a young girl came to my office, and wished to be examined. A short time was spent in conversation, and a shorter time was spent in questioning her upon the different branches she was to teach. Decided immaturity of mind, combined with the most meagre scholarship, soon became apparent in her case, and I was forced to remark, "I cannot license you." This decision did not excite surprise, "For," said she, "I did not expect a certificate, and told the trustees I could not get one, but they urged me to come, as they wished to expend just their public money for their winter and summer terms of school, and stated that none of the teachers licensed at the institute would teach cheap enough." This is but one of a great number of similar cases that have occurred under my own eyes during the last five years.

This ruinous policy extends through all the duties of these trustees which involve the expenditure of money, and it is the prominent cause of the present wretched condition of one-half of our public schools. Again, it is often the case, that in addition to his special regard for the finances of the district, some one of this triad will contrive to employ his daughter, or some other near relative, to teach the school in his district. He may succeed in securing the consent of the second, but the third dissents, uses his influence against the school, and rejoices in its downfall; others, in consequence, withdraw their children, and before the middle of the term, the school dwindles in numbers, the interest wanes, and one of the best results of the three trustee system is clearly seen and felt.

I have known but few cases in which a sole trustee in a district has hired a near relative to teach; and when this has been done, it has been done with the unanimous consent of the inhabitants of the district. In view of the foregoing considerations, and the fact that in those districts having but one trustee the *best men* have generally been selected for that office, I submit whether our Legislature ought not to abolish entirely the statute which suffers any district to elect three trustees.

ATTENDANCE OF PUPILS.—Were the tables of attendance furnished by trustees reliable, it would be easy to give any information desired upon this point. But so long as the footings of their abstracts of attendance frequently exceed the whole number of pupils in their districts, it will be idle to think of making their figures the basis of accurate calculation upon this subject.

Many schools are rendered almost valueless by irregularity of attendance, or by the withdrawal from school of those pupils who were present at their organization, and during the first month or two of their sessions. The causes of this irregularity are numerous. Many of the older pupils are detained at home in winter upon the supposition that their services are required there; and that to hire help when the labor of one's children would remove the necessity for such help, is bad economy. During the summer terms it is common to see schools which have reached their third month with an average attendance of from thirty to forty pupils reduced to fifteen or twenty, and sometimes less, with no other reason assigned than that the pupils are kept at home to pick berries.

But the ruin wrought by these inglorious causes of irregularity is of trifling magnitude compared with the disastrous effects produced by prospective rate-bills. I remember visiting a school in the winter of 1860, and finding a house far better than the average, a teacher of excellent ability, and eleven pupils in attendance; I noticed from the teacher's roll that the average attendance for the first month was thirty; asked him the reason of this "rapid falling off." He said, in reply: "I am told by the patrons that the trustees are paying me so much, that a rate-bill must be collected amounting to \$10." He was to receive \$16 per month. I afterward inquired of the best school men in the district as to the cause of this small attendance, and they fully corroborated the teacher's version of the case. I could not understand from any one that the teacher was in any degree unpopular, or that any of his patrons were disposed to find fault with his acts. This is but one of many cases in which the prospect of a rate-bill has ruined otherwise prosperous schools.

**SCHOOL HOUSES AND THEIR APPENDAGES.**—But few school houses seem to have been constructed with reference to the health and comfort of pupils, or the convenience of teachers. A low, small room, destitute of facilities for proper ventilation; seats narrow, sometimes without backs, and so high that children sitting on them "are in mid air staid;" desks so constructed that the pupil must necessarily have an awkward position; a hulk surrounded by neither out-buildings nor fence, is a description well applied to the provisions made for educational purposes in three-fourths of the districts under my supervision.

**SITES.**—In addition to the gaping roofs, yawning walls, and stilted benches which characterize so many of these humble seminaries, the sites seem to have been selected without regard to beauty or pleasant surroundings. The smallest and poorest spot of ground upon which a house will stand, and a highway for a playground, seem to be the chosen places for plastic mind to receive its most durable impressions, and sketch the outlines of its future history.

**APPARATUS.**—Globes are found in many districts, and blackboards in all. Aside from these, but little apparatus is in use, save in the departmental school at Castile. A more extensive, or a better chemical and

philosophical apparatus than the one belonging to this school is rarely seen in our higher seminaries of learning.

**STUDIES AND TEXT-BOOKS.**—The branches of study most generally pursued are reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic (mental and written), geography, analysis, and grammar. Algebra is receiving much more attention than it did formerly, but in too many instances it is commenced before the learner is at all thorough in the branches which naturally precede it. There seems to be a growing mania for mathematics in many schools, which overrides all else, and occasions the neglect of other studies of more than equal importance.

In many cases, the success of schools is hindered by the multiplicity of classes made necessary by a want of uniformity of text-books. In a few other instances, children have been sent to school a whole term without a book of any kind. I am happy to state that, in these respects, a great number of the schools have improved since the commencement of my office.

**TEACHERS.**—The number who have taught in this district for the last year, is 180; males, 49; females, 131. Many of these have taught a number of terms; but few intend to follow teaching as a permanent employment, on account of the scanty pittance offered for their services. About two-thirds of this number are in the practice of attending institutes, and availing themselves of such other means of improvement as are within their reach. Many of them teach so well as to render it difficult to find fault with their course, or suggest any change for the better. Indeed, during my official labors nothing has cheered me more than the steady growth of our teachers in that kind of knowledge which renders success certain and failure impossible; and I believe it not at all extravagant to say of a goodly number of those who were in the ranks at the commencement of my official career, that they are 50 per cent. in advance of what they were five years ago.

In the month of April, 1859, fifty applicants for certificates were rejected for deficiency in learning, ability or maturity; and some of this number for deficiency in all these. Many of them were young girls; too young to appreciate the importance of self-government; wanting in maturity as well as in a knowledge of the primary branches of study. Many of these had acquired some knowledge of botany, philosophy, &c., in our seminaries, without having taken their first lesson in mental arithmetic. Thanks to such of these as have heeded good advice; to those who have since taken the place of attentive pupils at the feet of humble knowledge, and thus learned that humility here is elsewhere exaltation.

There are but two undergraduates of the State Normal school teaching in my district, and no graduates.

In a few instances there has been a demand for teachers of high qualifications; but this has been supplied soon after salaries have been offered, adequate to their services. These cases are exceptions to the



general rule; and it is my belief that the practice will become more general when the one trustee system is everywhere in vogue. On the average, the zeal of our teachers is truly commendable, and in most cases it is "according to knowledge."

But few private schools have been opened in this district, and these have been of brief duration. It has been the object of these schools to advance the interests of some religious sect, or give employment to persons unqualified to teach in our regular public schools.

There are no union free schools in my district, organized under the law of 1853.

DISTRICT LIBRARIES.—My own knowledge of their condition in this half of the county warrants me in saying, that no part of our educational system is so worthless as this. In every district, except five or six, the statutes in regard to this system are wholly disregarded. Nearly all the districts which can, without violation of law, use their library money for teachers' wages, do so; and have for the last three years. I fully approve of the wisdom of this course; not because I fail to appreciate the importance of reading, nor because I wish to remove from our youth any real aid to the acquirement of general knowledge, but because thousands of dollars, for which the State receives no equivalent, are annually thrown away under the mockery of aiding in the work of general instruction. Place this money in the pockets of our earnest *teachers* as a just reward for noble service in a holy cause, and the State will receive an equivalent far more profitable than its thousands of ill-chosen volumes, "rusting out unused." When this system was first established it was wise and beneficent, and attended with beneficial results. But such books, periodicals and newspapers as now adorn the tables of every family that will read at all, were then rarely seen; and thus the district libraries became a necessity. But, even in the palmiest days of this system, there were families in every district which those books never reached; and these do not read, to-day. It is my firm belief that if the question, whether the library system should be wiped out or retained, were submitted to the people of my district, their votes would number it among the things that were.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.—These Normal schools have been in session from ten to eleven days each year since I commenced my official term. The interest manifested in them by teachers and educational men, at first moderate, is now intense; and it is truly gratifying to hear many of the attendants upon these sessions frankly declare at the close that they are able to teach better than ever before. There is no doubt in my mind, of the fact that these institutes are first in might among the auxiliaries for the improvement of teachers, and creating an interest in our public schools.

I subjoin the names of the instructors and lecturers at the last session held in this district:

Principal, J. H. French, LL. D., Syracuse; English Grammar, George

W. Mason, A. B., Attica; Penmanship, W. M. Benson, A. B., Castile. Lecturers—Rev. T. Lightbody, Castile, "The Duration of Memory;" Rev. L. W. Olney, Castile, "The Dignity of Study;" W. M. Benson, A. B., Principal of Castile Union school, "Congeniality of Pursuit the Soul of the World;" Warren S. Brown, North Java, "Silent Victories."

The following subjects each received a due share of attention: Geography, grammar, mental and written arithmetic, penmanship, composition and correspondence, object teaching, reading, primary instruction, and singing.

VISITATIONS.—During my term of office, it has been my practice to visit the schools in my district twice in each year, except the one immediately preceding the first of October, 1862; within that year a number of the schools were not visited in consequence of physical disability.

With much gratitude to the Department for ably sustaining my acts; to the friends of education for many words of sympathy and encouragement; and to the teachers, nobly toiling in a noble cause, for well-remembered tokens of respect, I close this my first report.

Respectfully submitted,

WARREN S. BROWN,

NORTH JAVA, Dec. 31, 1862.

*School Commissioner.*

## YATES COUNTY.

As there are several academies and private schools in the county, which are supported mainly by the older and more advanced pupils, but few persons between the ages of 16 and 21 attend the common schools. The war, too, has taken many of our young men between the ages of 18 and 21, who would otherwise attend the common schools or academies.

Three-fifths of all the children under 16, and over 4 years of age, attend the common schools some portion of the year, and full four-fifths between 6 and 16, so attend.

Rate-bills reduce the attendance, and the public sentiment of the middle and poorer classes is opposed to them, while the rich (with some honorable exceptions) are opposed to free schools, and in favor of rate-bills.

The school houses present fair exteriors, but the sites have almost invariably been poorly selected, and the house is made to occupy some out of the way place, which being considered good for nothing else, is set apart for this purpose. There are a very few fine locations, and grounds well and tastefully ornamented with trees, shrubs, &c. There is very much more pains taken in the selection, ornamenting, &c., of school grounds now than formerly. Nearly all the school houses are supplied with outbuildings. There has been in times past, but little pains taken in furnishing school houses, but there is marked improve-

ment in this direction. Houses in the rural districts are generally warmed by stoves, in which wood is used for fuel. Coal is very generally used in the village schools; some of the larger houses are warmed by furnaces. The houses are generally ventilated by raising and lowering the windows.

Schools are not well supplied with apparatus. We have a uniform series of text-books in use in nearly all the schools of the county. Orthography, reading, writing, geography, intellectual and practical arithmetic, grammar, book-keeping, algebra, physiology and philosophy are the branches more generally pursued. In some of the more advanced schools other branches are taught.

Pupils rarely enter before the 6th year, and usually leave common schools by the 16th. The whole time spent in district schools would not often exceed a dozen terms. The schools are generally prosperous, and progressing fairly—their wants, however, are still numerous. One of the most urgent consists in a scarcity of first class teachers—though this is not so great a barrier as under the old system. Two-fifths of the teachers employed are males, three-fifths females, one-half of these follow teaching as a permanent employment, and receive better wages than those who only teach a part of the time.

Teachers during the winter receive from \$20 to \$40 per month, in the summer from \$10 to \$30, besides board—most teachers board with the inhabitants in the rural districts.

There is a good attendance on teachers' institutes and associations. In regard to the success of our institute, you are already informed. The Yates county teachers' association was formed in 1857, since which time there has been a constantly increasing interest manifested in the society, both on the part of teachers and parents. The association held nine meetings in the different towns in the county during the year 1862, with an average attendance of 80 teachers, and an audience of from 300 to 400.

Teachers are subjected to written examinations, and are generally better prepared to teach mathematics than other branches; and most deficient in orthography, reading and grammar. Only a small number of teachers are well instructed in the theory and practice of teaching. Certificates are of three grades, first, for three years; second, for one year; and third, for six months and particular districts; besides institute certificates. There is a demand (increasing) for teachers of high qualifications. There are 14 graduates and undergraduates of the State Normal school employed in this county, with excellent success; their influence and zeal for improvement have done much to awaken interest, and the demand for their services is general.

There have been in attendance on our academies, for the year 1862, about 560. Starkey seminary has a fine building of brick, well arranged, and capable of accommodating 250 students. It has a philosophical and astronomical apparatus, and a good library. The Penn Yan academy



is pleasantly situated in the centre of the county. The building is of brick, well and conveniently constructed. It has a fine library, a chemical laboratory, and all kinds of school apparatus. Students are prepared in these institutions to enter, if required, the sophomore class in college. Starkey seminary is supported mainly by tuition fees. Penn Yan academy is free to those residing within the district, but tuition is charged to foreign students. The teachers' classes taught in these institutions are of great practical benefit to the common schools.

The number of private schools is gradually decreasing. I have not the data from which to ascertain the precise number of pupils in attendance on them.

There are no schools for colored children exclusively.

There is but one union free school district, which embraces the village of Penn Yan.

District school libraries have been very much neglected; the books have been badly selected, and for this reason they are not held in esteem by the people.

About one-half of the districts have but one trustee. But few of the trustees strictly comply with the requirements of No. 116 of the Code of Public Instruction.

A full report of the last teachers' institute was transmitted to your Department at the close of the institute.

I have visited the schools in the county during the past year from one to three times respectively, as you will observe from my abstract. I have attended every meeting of teachers' association, have held examinations for teachers twice in each town in the county, was in attendance on the institute the whole term, and had charge of the same. I have, besides, disposed of a large amount of office business usually devolving upon a school commissioner.

Respectfully submitted.

GEO. P. LORD,

*School Commissioner.*

the city of Boston, and the surrounding country, from the first settlement of the Puritans in 1630, to the present time. The history is divided into three parts: the first part contains the history of the city from 1630 to 1700; the second part contains the history of the city from 1700 to 1780; and the third part contains the history of the city from 1780 to the present time. The first part of the history is the most interesting, as it contains the story of the city's early years, and the struggles of the Puritans to establish a new society in the New World. The second part of the history is also very interesting, as it contains the story of the city's growth and development during the 18th century. The third part of the history is the least interesting, as it contains the story of the city's decline and fall during the 19th century.

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